DJANGGAWUL

AN ABORIGINAL RELIGIOUS CULT
OF NORTH-EASTERN
ARNHEM LAND

by

RONALD M. BERNDT

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TO MAUWULAN AND WONDJUG

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Female children are under the round fringed *ngainmara* mats, one at each side of both Sisters, while the male children are unprotected. Each group of people belongs to a certain region.

4 This whole drawing shows in detail various Djanggawul *nara* ceremonies. 17 532 796

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above: the black *gagaga* bird perched on a rock at Walbinboi just outside Jelangbara.

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below: *djirindili* calling of the invocations (*bugali*) on the *gararag* pole. Three men are dancing around him, invoking.

Third panel, above: tide flowing in.

below: the Sea dance, flowing water, etc.

Fourth panel, above: Flying Fox dance—two men on *gararag* pole.

below: Water dancing.

Fifth panel, above: two men dance the male and female goanna.

below: the goanna *rangga*, which is danced by the two men shown above.

band: two *mauwulan rangga*.

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below: red parakeet dancing.

778 5 The *rangga* emblems are displayed on the sacred ground, while special songs relating to them are sung. 32

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7 *From left to right:* 33

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Illustrations

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9 Postulants dancing the Incoming Tide, coming on to the sacred ground; they imitate the *rangga* folk, who emerged from the Sisters. 81 796 535

10 Invocations are called, while *jiritja* moiety postulants await the emergence of the sacred emblems. 81

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12 A ceremonial leader representing the Djanggawul Brother after his landing at Port Bradshaw. He bends forward to taste the fresh water which gushed up after he had inserted the *mauwulan rangga*. 96 796

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Illustrations

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below: goanna on *djuda* tree; and sacred Goanna Tail *rangga*.

The two panels are divided by goanna tracks.

Right-hand panel, top: goanna on *djuda* tree; tracks, and sacred design.

below: goanna on *djuda* tree: one Djanggawul Sister with beating sticks, beside Goanna Tail *rangga*.

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18 *Nara* postulants representing male and female Goanna. The Goanna Tail *rangga* rests across the younger man's neck. 145

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20 Postulants in stylized attitudes, with the Goanna Tail *rangga*; sacred shade, at the Place of the Mauwulan. 160

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22 To the rhythmic beat of clapping sticks, the Julunggul Rock Python drone pipe emerges from the *dua* moiety *nara* shade. Postulants are lying on their backs, huddled together, with the *rangga* emblem resting upon them. 161

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23 Left-hand panel: Bildjiwuraroiju, Miralaidj and the Djanggawul Brother (top). The Two Sisters have long clitorises, and the Brother a long penis, which drag on the ground, and resemble *djuda rangga*. They hold goanna tail and 208

mauwulan rangga, one in each hand. People (symbolized by dots) have come from the Two Sisters: a small circle of *rangga* folk is seen dancing, among them the Two Wauwalag Sisters. 532 773

Right-hand panel, above: the Djanggawul Brother is inserting his hand into Miralaidj's vagina, and removing *rangga* folk, shown flowing from her. *Rangga* emblems are ranged beside the Brother and Sister. This took place at Dulmulwondeinbi, near Marabai.

Right-hand panel, below: Bildjiwuraroiju, opposite Miralaidj. The Djanggawul Brother has lifted aside their clitorises, and put his hand into their vaginae. People flow out, male *rangga* folk on one side, and females on the other. This took place at Jalwuljalwul.

24 *From left to right:* 208

First panel: Miralaidj as central figure; on each side of her is a woman, one (above) being her elder Sister and one (below) Bammarimarawi, her daughter and 'sister'.

Afterbirth blood flows from Miralaidj into a hole, and she stands holding two poles; as soon as the hole is filled, it overflows and runs from each side. It is after this that the elder Sister, by hitting the young Sister's hips, stops the flow of blood. Four rangga folk then come out (two men and two women).

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NOTE ON ILLUSTRATIONS

126 The crayon drawings illustrated here represent only a small selection of those available, and stored at the Department of Anthropology, Sydney University. They do not show to advantage in black and white and it is hoped that later on a wider selection will be presented in colour. Only brief descriptions of each drawing have been inserted here; each drawing contains a great deal of detail, which ideally requires considerable explanation, not possible in this volume.

All these drawings were collected between 29th January, 1947 and 15th June, 1947 at Yirrkalla, in north-eastern Arnhem Land. They were done on brown paper with coloured lumber crayon and black pencil, and were used by the writer as an adjunct to his field notes. They conform to traditional patterns and representations, which would normally be drawn on stringy bark boards in coloured ochres. [532]

FOREWORD

The Djanggawul religious cult of north-eastern and north- 794
central Arnhem Land has been selected for detailed study 773
because it is more important to the Aborigines themselves than other religious cults in that region. It is older established than, for example, the well-known Wauwalak cycle[1] which sponsors the *djunggawon*, *kunapipi* and *ngurlmag* rituals. The Wauwalak themselves are really the daughters of the Djanggawul, while the *kunapipi* and *ngurlmag* have both been introduced into eastern Arnhem Land. The Djanggawul myth substantiates and gives traditional sanction to the performance of its relevant rituals, known as the *dua nara*. *Dua* is the name of the moiety primarily concerned with this myth [616] and its rituals; the opposite moiety, the *jiritja*, has a counterpart in the *jiritja nara*, sanctioned by Laintjung, an Ancestral Being who is usually described in conjunction with his son, Banaitja. The Djanggawul, Laintjung, Banaitja and the Wauwalak are the principal ancestral characters who, in eastern Arnhem Land, serve as institutors of religious ritual, dogma and behaviour. However, the Djanggawul Brother and Sisters are by far the most important of these. The *dua nara* Djanggawul cult is also more conservative than, for example, that of Laintjung and Banaitja, for the latter has admitted alien elements, whereas the former has remained, as far as we can ascertain, more purely traditional.

During the course of field work in the Yirrkalla region of north- 794
eastern Arnhem Land, the importance of Djanggawul ritual and 126
songs was brought forcibly to my attention. The Aborigines

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[1] W. L. Warner, *A Black Civilization*, New York, 1937, pp. 244-334. See also R. Berndt, *Kunapipi*, Cheshire, Melbourne, 1951, Chapter III.

Foreword

194 themselves considered the Djanggawul to be the dominant figures
in the Ancestral Times, and this attitude was borne out in the
126 reverence they gave and the attention they paid to all features
relating to the Djanggawul. Even those of the opposite moiety,
people who looked to Laintjung and Banaitja, admitted the primary
importance of the *dua* Djanggawul. I was fortunate, during this
period, in being able to examine and record a number of versions
of Djanggawul mythology from a relatively wide range of informants,
the majority of whom were ceremonial headmen for
their particular linguistic groups, and in addition to record in detail
the greater part of the associated song cycle. I was able also to attend
most of the *dua nara* rituals that took place during my visit. My
knowledge of these rituals and songs was considerably enhanced
later after a further visit to the north-central region, Milingimbi,
where the Djanggawul song cycle was again obtained in detail,
and relevant rituals observed.

114 The social organization and the culture of eastern Arnhem Land
have already been treated partially in other works,[1] so that there is
no need here for repetition. The reader is warned, however, that
he will find it necessary to refer to these for information on various
points such as the *dua-jiritja* moiety system, the clan and linguistic
group organization, marriage rules, economic background and
natural resources of this region, and so on, which although relevant
101 to this study cannot here be treated in full. Arnhem Land is to-day
an Aboriginal Reserve in the north-eastern region of the Northern
Territory of Australia,[2] and a similar cultural pattern extends from
Blue Mud Bay in the south-east to Cape Stewart on the north-central
coast. That is to say, all the Aborigines within this area
(approximately 1,500 to 2,000) possess a common social organization
and religious ideology, and speak varying dialects of one

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[1] *Vide* L. Warner, *op. cit.*, 1937; also, by the same author, 'Morphology and Functions of the Australian Murngin Type of Kinship', *American Anthropologist*, n.s., 33, 2, 184; T. T. Webb, 'Tribal Organization in Eastern Arnhem Land', *Oceania*, Vol. III, No. 4; A. P. Elkin, 'Marriage and Descent in East Arnhem Land', *Oceania*, Vol. III, No. 4, pp. 412-16, and his 'The Complexity of Social Organization in Arnhem Land', *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, Vol. 6, No. 1, pp. 1-20; W. E. Lawrence and G. P. Murdock, 'Murngin Social Organization', *American Anthropologist*, 1949, Vol. 51, No. 1, pp. 58-65; A. P. Elkin, R. and C. Berndt, *Art in Arnhem Land*, Cheshire, Melbourne, 1950, and *University of Chicago Press*, 1950, pp. 20-7; R. Berndt, *Kunapipi*, Cheshire, Melbourne, 1951, Chapter I *b*.

[2] For its geographical position and natural resources, see A. P. Elkin, R. and C. Berndt, *op. cit.*, 1950, pp. 20-1, R. Berndt, *Kunapipi*, Chapter I *a*, and R. and C. Berndt, *Arnhem Land—Its History and Its People*, for publication, Cheshire, Melbourne. See also accompanying map to this volume.

language. Their society is constructed on the moiety principle, 101
and descent is in all cases primarily patrilineal. There is no clearly
defined tribe, but a series of linguistic groups associated with clans;
all of these may be called, collectively, the Wulamba bloc of the
Miwaitj language group (referring to the sum total of the different
dialects). Yirrkalla is situated on the extreme north-east corner of 131
Arnhem Land between Melville Bay and Cape Arnhem, and
Aborigines gather there from places as far distant as Blue Mud
and Caledon and Trial Bays, Rose River, and Woodah and Groote
Islands in the south and south-east, and Arnhem and Buckingham
Bays, Elcho, English Company and Wessel Islands in the north-west.
Milingimbi is in the Crocodile Island group on the central-north
coast; it is also a meeting place for members of many groups,
particularly those from the mainland around the Blyth, Goyder
and Woolen Rivers.

Virtually all the writer's field work has been carried out through 123
the medium of the native language, both at Yirrkalla and Milingimbi.
Knowledge of local dialects is essential in social anthropological 122
work, and particularly in a study of Aboriginal religion. Field work
at Yirrkalla was carried out in 1946–7 and at Milingimbi in 1950
(a total period of thirteen months actually working on the field
in this particular region); the first period was made possible by
grants from the Australian National Research Council, and was
under the auspices of the Department of Anthropology, University
of Sydney, while the latter period was financed by grants from the
Research Committee of the University of Sydney and the Department
of Anthropology of the same University. Writing up of this
material was also made possible by grants from the Research
Committee.

So many informants have helped in the process of collecting the 115
data presented here that a list of their names would be tiresome 124
and meaningless to the reader. Not only main *dua* moiety headmen,
but also those of the *jiritja* moiety, contributed; and these were 126
members of many linguistic groups. In addition, attitudes of local
Aboriginal women towards this religious cult were discussed with
them by my wife (Catherine Berndt), and this aided directly the
analysis of certain sections. This study of the Djanggawul, then,
does not express solely the information and attitudes of male
natives, but takes into account both male and female elements in
the culture. The practice in recording the interlinear phonetic
renderings of the songs was for informants belonging to a particular
area through which the Djanggawul passed to put forward those
songs themselves, for it was their country and they were expected
to have more complete knowledge of the songs. In this way, each

115 part was presented by the most capable leaders and song men
124 available for the particular territory concerned. This was the case
also in recording the myth, which unfortunately cannot here be
126 presented in its phonetic rendering. All features of the myth and songs were collectively discussed, and interpretations made by the Aborigines themselves.

121 A considerable amount of thought has gone into the question of
presenting the available data on the Djanggawul. It has finally
128 been decided to present as much as possible of the 'raw' material without, apart from interpretation and partial analysis, engaging in theoretical discussion, for material of this type obviously lends itself to such treatment. It is our contention that the rôle of the anthropologist in the Australian Aboriginal field should be one of recording data, and of presenting these in an accessible form, so that the maximum amount of material may be available for the consideration of students interested primarily in theory. That is not to say that we disparage that particular branch of anthropological science, but that we ourselves are more intimately concerned with Australian Aboriginal problems as such and, although taking into account the wider implication of our material, we must of necessity restrict our outlook to some extent. This, to us, is an important point, for we in Australia are acutely aware of the limitations of available anthropological data. Considering the geographical extent of the Australian continent, and the apparent diversity of Aboriginal cultural groups within it, we must admit that our knowledge of these societies is sparse. It is our duty, as we see it, to compensate in some degree for this deficiency. We do of course realize that, although our problems seem to us momentous, they diminish somewhat with distance, and when viewed in relation to the sum total of human experience throughout the world they become of much less pressing significance.

000 During the last two decades Australian Anthropology has received an impetus, principally through the personal efforts of Professors A. P. Elkin and A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, and the Australian National Research Council has sent on to the field a series of anthropologists: this activity, and its results, have helped to counteract in some degree the errors of the past. Nevertheless, we in Australia are aware that although much has been done, there still remains more to do.

To say 'errors of the past' is not to disparage the monumental works of Sir Baldwin Spencer and F. J. Gillen, Carl Strehlow and others. What they lacked in anthropological method they made up in energy, and in their power to stimulate interest among anthropologists and others; they inspired, for instance, Emile Durkheim

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and Sir James Frazer, and their individual importance may not be underestimated. 008

It is our plan to present in one volume the substance of the Djanggawul cult; this includes the significance of the myth and ritual, the myth itself, the song cycle, and a partial analysis. A great deal rests on the cycle itself, which is essentially the core of the work; so we have deliberately chosen to give poetic renderings of the songs in English. The second volume is devoted entirely to the interlinear phonetic renderings,[1] with detailed notes attached; the reader is advised to read the English translations in conjunction with these, which of necessity include many additional references. This arrangement still leaves untreated a great deal of material relating to the Djanggawul. It is planned, therefore, to present at an early date the complete Milingimbi version of the song cycle, with analysis, for this differs in several major points from the Yirrkalla version presented here. The Yirrkalla song cycle as set out here contains 188 separate songs, and the Milingimbi cycle 264 songs.[2] There is also a mass of material relating to the rituals themselves, and to dreams. Here we are able to give only a brief sketch of the sequence of *dua nara* ritual, without treating it in detail. The dreams of various informants at Yirrkalla about 124 128

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[1] In this volume native words are recorded (for publication purposes) in an anglicized version of our usual phonetic rendering, without using special symbols—whereas usually we follow the system recommended by the International Phonetic Association, with modifications and additions by Dr. A. Capell (*vide* 'Methods and Materials for Recording Australian Languages', *Oceania*, 1945, Vol. XVI, pp. 144–76). 104

There is a very real need for conformity of orthography in regard to Australian Aboriginal languages, and this can be achieved only by the use of standardized symbols. Thus *j* is generally used with its Continental value of *y*. The use of the *y* initially or within a word is too loose even in anglicized spelling, while *j* is a much more accurate rendering of the native sound.

It is hoped that future workers in Arnhem Land, or for that matter in other parts of Aboriginal Australia, will build on the orthographic foundations being laid to-day by anthropologists and linguists in Australia. It is partly on this account, the unwillingness of some field workers to conform, that Aboriginal terms and concepts are often hard to identify as between different authors. When reference is made to the work of Professor Lloyd Warner, *A Black Civilization*, and native words are quoted, his rendering is given alongside of ours. Recent anthropologists like T. G. H. Strehlow, *Aranda Traditions*, have also adhered to the use of the *j*.

[2] The Yirrkalla songs are on the whole longer than those from Milingimbi. The latter cycle continues the travels of the Djanggawul to Balbanara; this place is between the Blyth and Kupangu Creeks and the Liverpool River, inland from about the centre of Boucaut Bay, west of Milingimbi. A volume (entitled *Daughters of the Sun*) containing and discussing the Milingimbi version of the Djanggawul has now been prepared for publication.

121 128 Djanggawul ritual and interpretation bring a new perspective to bear on this phase of their life: dreams express individual attitudes towards the cult, and often show distortion of conventional ritual behaviour. In addition, there is the women's attitude towards the Djanggawul ideology, their ritual behaviour, the songs and stories they know, and their place in the general configuration.[1] Also available is a comparatively large series of stringy bark and brown paper drawings relating to the travels of the Djanggawul.

008 In conclusion, we must consider the question of whether or not the Arnhem Land Aborigines will themselves benefit from a study of this type. It is our belief that understanding of the fundamental issues involved in a religious cult like that of the Djanggawul will (or should) persuade administrators, missionaries and teachers to adopt a more tolerant attitude towards Aboriginal indigenous life. Through it they may glimpse the complexity of its organization and the simplicity of the basic theme: they will understand too the inter-relationship of Aboriginal life with the natural environment, the natives' dependence on the resources available to them, and their faith in the divine nature of the great Ancestral Beings. Through this medium they may, perhaps, come to know and appreciate something of the Aborigines' way of life.

There has been much discussion among anthropologists regarding the mingling of basic research results with applied anthropology.[2] We believe, however, that the anthropologist who over a period has worked with a particular group of people, who has learnt their language, has come to appreciate their way of life, has become in some degree absorbed (as far as this is possible for a stranger and a European) into the society, and has become interested in and emotionally attached to them, discovers sooner or later that he feels morally obliged to aid them in some practical way. Professor Herskovits has commented on this obligation: 'It is the nature of the case that the anthropologist is best fitted to see the strains and stresses of underprivileged groups, or of natives who no longer control their own lives. He sees these stresses and strains from the less pleasant, under-side of the situations in which they live. He sees the problems of the natives as no administrator, however gifted, can possibly see them. When, then he is in a position to aid in obtaining for the natives he knows some reinstatement of the human rights they have been deprived of, he customarily welcomes the opportunity . . .'[3] This is what the

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[1] This latter section will be treated later in some detail by Catherine H. Berndt.

[2] *Vide* E. E. Evans-Pritchard, 'Applied Anthropology', *Africa*, 1946, Vol. XVI, pp. 92-8, and Melville J. Herskovits, *Man and his Works*, 1949, New York, pp. 650-5.

[3] M. J. Herskovits, *op. cit.*, p. 652.

Foreword

anthropologist feels in Australia to-day, for most Australian Aboriginal groups are in varying degrees of contact with Europeans, while the coastal Arnhem Landers have had a long history of contact with aliens.[1] While realizing our obligations to the people with whom we work, the Aborigines whom we have come to know and respect, becoming perhaps more deeply concerned with local problems than with world-wide issues, we should not, of course, lose sight of the debt we owe to our own culture, or of the wider issues of anthropology. To quote once more: 'Science would hold that knowledge about that (Indian) tribe is less important than knowledge about all Indians (e.g.), or generalizations about human nature and society . . . It is a misapprehension that the anthropologist is primarily concerned with the community he is studying. Typically, and ideally, he is not. He studies that community to gain understanding of all communities, and of culture and society in general.'[2] Not all anthropologists, however, realize these implications. To balance the above quotation, one should add that such objectivity is rarely obtainable, and that the anthropologist's knowledge of culture and society in general should also be applied to the particular problems of a specific community or tribe. For if we owe a debt to the science of Anthropology itself, we owe an even greater debt to the native peoples who have supplied the material upon which that science has been established.

I wish to acknowledge first my own personal debt to the many Arnhem Land Aborigines who have supplied the substance of this volume. Had it not been for their patience and tolerance, our knowledge of this particular cult would be considerably poorer. Reliable data cannot be obtained by an anthropologist simply through entering an alien society and living among its representatives: some sympathy and rapport is essential between anthropologist and informant, and the degree of intimacy attained helps to determine the quality of the material.

I wish also to acknowledge my indebtedness to Professor A. P. Elkin of the Department of Anthropology, University of Sydney, without whose active help and constant encouragement this field work and 'writing-up' could not have been accomplished. I thank also my wife, Catherine H. Berndt, who has helped greatly both on the field and in the preparation of this manuscript for publication.

RONALD M. BERNDT,
Department of Anthropology, University of Sydney.

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[1] R. and C. Berndt, *Arnhem Land—Its History and Its People.*

[2] S. Tax, 'Anthropology and Administration', *América Indígena*, 1945, Vol. V, pp. 26-7, 28. *Vide* M. Herskovits' discussion, *op. cit.*, pp. 642 ff.

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Chapter One

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DJANGGAWUL

DJANGGAWUL, used collectively, is a name given to three Ancestral Beings; alternatively, it may be Djangga or Djangg'gau. Usually it refers to two Sisters and a Brother, although in the Milingimbi version the latter is not mentioned.[1] In north-eastern Arnhem Land, as in the version presented in this volume, the Brother and his two Sisters are always represented. The Brother, known by himself as Djanggawul, is also called, less frequently, Ganjudingu.[2] His 'inside'[3] name is Gundanguru, which means the 'nail' or spike of a 'nail' fish; an alternative 'inside' name is Balwadjar, which has a similar meaning. The elder Sister is Bildjiwuraroiju (or Bildjiwuraru), a name derived from the sacred term *duldjijuldji*, meaning the point of the sacred *mauwulan rangga* emblem.[4] She has the alternative names of Reiwurjun, meaning, 'getting tired (after long paddling)', and referring to the Djanggawul's paddling from Bralgu to the Australian mainland; and of Ganinjara, which means also the point of the *mauwulan* (its point enters her vagina, for the *mauwulan* is a symbolic penis).

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[831]

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[1] The presence of the Djanggawul Brother is not mentioned by L. Warner, *op. cit.*, pp. 335–40.

[2] The Milingimbi version calls the elder Sister Djanggawul (said to be a derivation of the name Gurulgurul, belonging to a *wongar* Dreaming man at Bralgu); the younger Sister is said to be called Ganjudingu (meaning the fin of the barramundi fish). Collectively they were also called Maijilwara, which is a 'big' name.

[3] The use of 'inside' terms is confined to sacred songs; they may also be called on the sacred ground during ritual. Normally, they are used only by men fully acquainted with the relevant ideology, and very rarely in ordinary conversation.

[4] Also said to mean 'a long clitoris dragging'.

[831]

Significance of the Djanggawul

776 The younger Sister is usually called Miralaidj, Malalait or Mandalaidj, which means the 'younger' green-backed turtle called *deirei*.
773 She is also called Djurdjunga, 'clouds coming up', or Balmabalma, which means a 'sacred shade' used on the ritual *nara* ground; this latter has the 'inside' name Mal'marangu.

In the north-eastern Arnhem Land version these three are accompanied by Bralbral (or Barabara), who stands in relationship to them as *waridj* or *mari*, a mother's mother's brother's son's son. He has no other name, and appears only at the beginning of the myth and the song cycle.

773 831 Although these three principal Ancestral Beings are brother and sisters, one version of this story tells that the Brother Djanggawul had in the beginning only one Sister, Bildjiwuraroiju and that it was through his incestuous intercourse with her that Miralaidj was born. Miralaidj did not, however, call Bildjiwuraroiju and her brother mother and father: instead she called them respectively elder sister and brother. That is, 'one Sister came out from the big Sister; and this younger one called the other one sister because she came out first, long before Bildjiwuraroiju gave birth to the children who are said to be the direct ancestors of the Aborigines living to-day'. But Djanggawul had coitus with the younger Sister who actually, according to this version, is his own daughter. This incestuous behaviour is nothing unusual, for in the myth the Brother often has coitus with his two Sisters. To all intents and purposes, Bildjiwuraroiju and Miralaidj are treated as Sisters.

773 These Beings came from a far distant country, and on the way to the Arnhem Land mainland stopped at Bralgu, the *dua* moiety island of the dead. Bralgu is a mythical place, but some native informants say that it may perhaps be an island near Mornington (one of the Wellesley Islands in the Gulf of Carpentaria), or alternatively an island off the Cape York Peninsula.[1] To-day its geographical position remains unclarified, and it is still the Home of the Eternal Spirits, the spirits of departed ancestors as well as of those Beings who were there when the Djanggawul themselves visited the island. It is said, too, that the Djanggawul possessed at that time a far greater number of sacred objects, but because they had only a bark canoe to get to the Australian mainland they were obliged to leave many behind.

773 821 The ultimate origin of the Djanggawul is now shrouded in antiquity, and it is fruitless to hypothesize. They are said, however, to be closely associated with the Sun. One myth tells that the Sun,

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[1] Or, at Milingimbi, said to be near Mapoon Mission station off Cape York Peninsula. This place was suggested by informants who were attempting to place Bralgu in relation to some known site, indicating that it was somewhere in that direction.

a woman, possessed two daughters who were later to become 773
the Djanggawul Sisters. But while the Yirrkalla myth and song 821
cycle do not refer directly to them as Sun daughters, many symbolic references are made to the sun and to its warmth; in fact, the whole concept of the myth, with the growth of human beings and trees, and so on, depends on the presence of the Sun, through the agency of the Two Sisters. In the Milingimbi version this aspect is treated in great detail, if somewhat symbolically; one is left in no doubt as to who the two Sisters really were, and their affinity with the Sun. For example, the feathered strings from the *lindaridj* parakeet which they carried were symbolic of the sun's rays; they travelled from east to west, as the sun itself travels, and from their vulvae the sun's rays spread, while to-day one name for the disc of the [831]
midday sun is *dagu*, *gunbai* or *dala*, meaning the Djanggawul Sisters' vulvae or vaginae.

There is little doubt, then, that the Sisters, if not the Brother, 776
are projections of the Sun. If they are not Sun Goddesses themselves, they are closely linked with the Sun. The question of whether or not it is legitimate to describe certain Aboriginal Ancestral Beings as gods and goddesses raises, of course, a number of problems. Nevertheless, these particular Ancestral Beings are themselves divine in that they possess creative abilities, and are sacred in the full sense of the word. From this point of view, the appellation 'god' or 'goddess' is in order; but by using it we do not in any way imply that these Aboriginal Ancestral Beings, or the sacred emblems they brought with them, are worshipped in the Christian sense. The concept of 'worshipping' is far removed from [782]
conventional Aboriginal religious thought: things or Beings are held in reverence, or even in awe, but never worshipped in the way that we understand the term. Our choice of a title for these Beings, however, endowed as they are with all the attributes which go to form the idea of Godhead, is primarily a matter of terminology.

These Beings brought with them to the Arnhem Land coast 773
a variety of sacred emblems, which are material symbols of their
cult. First and foremost was the *ngainmara* mat, alternatively called 778
muralungul, *dalwuldalwul* or *wagulwagul*; the latter term applies particularly to the mat's 'mouth' or opening. *Ngainmara* is a secular term, with *nania* as another alternative. This mat is the symbolic [831]
uterus of either Sister, but it may also mean the whale, or simply a mat. Its attributes were so sacred, representing as it did the Uteri 778
of the Djanggawul, that it is no longer endowed with ritual value; it has passed generally into the society, and is used primarily by women. That is to say, its sacredness was of such intensity that it could not be kept for use in ceremonies alone, but became an

778 article of everyday use. Moreover, since it is symbolically associated
with females, their use of it is not incongruous. The mat, conically
[285] shaped, is plaited from split and dried pandanus fibre, and usually
has a fringe symbolizing the Sisters' pubic hair. Adult women
and children still shelter under such mats from time to time. A
[513] child, for instance, may curl up asleep beneath one, completely
hidden from view; and then he, or she, may be likened to the
sacred *rangga* emblems which in the mythological period were
kept within the mat.

The Djanggawul brought with them, too, a dilly bag woven
from pandanus fibre interlaced with red breast-feathers of the
parakeet, with feathered pendants attached. This is the sacred
dilly bag or spirit bag called *jelagandja*, or *mundaidjngu*. It is sacred
because it is worn by men during certain ceremonies, particularly
the *dua nara*, and contains part of their spirit self; for this bag is
[831] also a symbol of the uterus, from which (or, alternatively, from the
ngainmara) men and women came forth in the beginning. Waxed
knobs fastened at intervals along the feathered string may contain
foreskins, said to be an allusion to fertility. These bags, although
highly sacred, are not kept on the ritual ground, nor are they
regarded as secret. Worn by men in the camp, they are seen by all,
and women too may use them at times. In fact, their making is
[462] often entrusted to women, who in the Milingimbi area also prepare
the beautiful feathered string (although in the north-eastern area
this particular variety is made by men). It is only when the bag
is almost finished that it is passed over to the men, who ritually,
to the accompaniment of sacred invocation and singing, cut the
loose fringe (the pubic hair or, alternatively, the clitorises of the
Two Sisters)[1] and attach the red feathered pendants (the rays of
the sun from the Djanggawul). The bag is then returned to the
women, who complete the edging and attach the handle of jungle
twine. The men who have cut the fringe, because they belong to
dua moiety groups responsible for the *nara* Djanggawul rituals,
are termed 'the Children of the Djanggawul'—like the children
who came in the beginning from the sacred uteri of the Sisters
(*vide* the myth and the songs).

The Djanggawul also carried with them sacred poles, known as *rangga*. These poles are very sacred; they are used only on the ritual ground, and are seen only by fully initiated men or by neophytes. Women, however, know of their existence and can describe their shape and decoration, and discuss their meaning.

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[1] The basic symbolism of this, as an umbilical cord, will be discussed later in this volume.

Significance of the Djanggawul

There seem to have been, originally, several basic types: the *djuda*, 778
or tree *rangga*, from which trees sprang up when the *rangga* was plunged into the ground by the Djanggawul; the *mauwulan*, or stick used by the Djanggawul Brother as a 'walking stick', which he plunged into the ground so that spring water gushed forth; the *ganinjari*, 'yam' or walking stick (sometimes confused with the *mauwulan*), carried by the Sisters, and used for obtaining water in the same way;[1] and the *djanda*, or tail of the goanna, with the same function as the *mauwulan*, derived from the goanna seen by the Djanggawul on arrival at Jelangbara, Port Bradshaw.

These original forms have been elaborated into a variety of [532
rangga emblems. They include various poles or objects of totemic
wongar origin, related directly or indirectly to the Djanggawul; 831]
rangga symbolizing vulva or vagina, penis or testes; stone *rangga*, derived from a stone which was removed from the vagina of the younger Sister; and conventionalized representations of the Djanggawul themselves, for example, the *wirlgul* (younger Sister) *rangga* or the *gungwan* (elder Sister) *rangga*. All of these are decorated [531
with clan patterns derived from those originally given by the
Djanggawul[2] to the 'new generation' which emerged from the 614]
Sisters' uteri; and most have attached to them feathered string—the red parakeet feathers symbolizing the rays of the sun, the red sky at sunset, or blood from the Sisters. They are used in dancing on the sacred ground, and in posturing before the sacred shade or hut; the latter symbolizes the uterus or *ngainmara* mat, and in it *rangga* are stored just as were the first *rangga* in the beginning. Parakeet feathered string was also among the objects brought by the Djanggawul.

All these objects, then, have symbolic significance, and relate 778
to the basic theme of Djanggawul ritual and mythology. This
theme is fertility, manifested in the perpetually pregnant Women, 831
the Two Sisters, in the growth of trees and foliage, in the creation 182
of running springs, and in the abiding and life-giving warmth of the sun's rays. It reflects the Aborigines' fundamental reliance on the products of their natural environment, and their emphasis on the procreation of human and animal life, the continuance of their own species and of the food which supplies them with sustenance. They see the theme of fertility mirrored in their surroundings, and in the rhythmic sequence of the seasons, and recognize their own dependence on these and on other natural phenomena for their very being.

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[1] The two Sisters are also said to have urinated in various places, making sometimes small streams, and sometimes pools or wells: in the latter case, the well itself is often likened to their vaginae.

[2] *Vide* A. P. Elkin, R. and C. Berndt, *Art in Arnhem Land*, pp. 28–41.

Significance of the Djanggawul

778 These material objects, then, such as the sacred *rangga*, bag and
831 mat, are focal points, or symbols, through which we may grasp
the significance of the concept as a whole. The mat is a uterus
182 symbol; so is the whale, although used in this sense only incidentally.
Here is the source of all life, for it was from the Uteri of the Sisters
that the first people sprang. Moreover, these Aborigines have
[842] recognized the importance of the sexual act in causing conception
and pregnancy. This natural sequence of events has many parallels
in the animal life they observe about them. Throughout the myth
[773] direct references are made to sexual intercourse, while symbolic
references in both the myth and songs are numerous. The *rangga*
poles, the yam stick, *mauwulan*, *djuda* and *djanda* are themselves
penis symbols, an interpretation made quite frankly by the Aborigines themselves. The poles, for instance, are kept hidden within
the *ngainmara*, and removed from time to time for drying, thus
symbolizing coitus (penis in vagina as a projection of the uterus),
and drying the penis after intercourse when it has become 'wet'
with semen and vaginal juices. Or the *mauwulan* is plunged into the
earth, so that water gushes forth at its removal; this is compared
to coitus, the removal of the penis from the vagina, and the subsequent flow of seminal and vaginal juices when the Sisters stand up
[823 again. Waterholes themselves are vulva symbols, used frequently
in Aboriginal song and mythology, while trees (for example,
824] the *djuda*) are penis symbols, and their roots are called by the term
used for penis (*vide* songs). A great deal of this erotic symbolism
is expressed in sacred ritual, in posturing and actions.

From this we see something of the importance of sexual inter-
831 course. To the Aborigines, as to us, sex and food are basic drives.
Whatever subsidiary drives exist, these two are fundamental, for
upon them human life, as they know it, depends. The Aborigines
are apt to stress the importance of the sexual drive. 'How else',
they say, 'can we continue as a group? By what other means can
we obtain food except by its natural increase?' Thus even certain
[824] forms of plant life are divided into male and female sexes. Sexual
intercourse is felt to be necessary for survival, in so far as the human
and animal world is concerned, although this survival depends
ultimately on forces beyond the Aborigines' control—on seasonal
fluctuation, and on the sun, and so we come back to the significance
underlying the Djanggawul. The Aborigines of north-eastern and
north-central Arnhem Land consequently pay much attention to
831 sexual matters, and their attitude towards this subject is one of
842 utmost frankness.[1] To them, sexual intercourse is an essential

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[1] *Vide* Introduction to *Sexual Behaviour in Western Arnhem Land* (R. and C. Berndt), Viking Fund Series in Anthropology, Yale University, 1951. No 16.

preliminary to pregnancy. Children in this area, for instance, are 831
called *judu* (*jutu*, usually employed in a singular sense), or *djamarguli* 842
(plural). The former word means 'semen'; that is, the child originated
from the semen. The latter means 'through (or from) work'; to
'work' (*djama*) a female is to have coitus, and *djamarguli* is literally
the 'result of working (or coitus)'.

Erotic references, then, in the Djanggawul cult merely conform 831
to the accepted pattern. To say that the Aborigine is concerned
unduly with the subject of sex, and derives a morbid satisfaction 182
from constant direct or symbolic reference to it, it to distort the 794
actual position. He is frankly interested in the workings of the
human body, and in the satisfaction of its basic needs; and he
recognizes the fundamental importance of the act, not only in
ensuring the continuation of life, but also in helping to stabilize
relations between members of both sexes, through their very interdependence.
It is not unexpected, therefore, to find manifestations
of this interest in Aboriginal religious emblems and mythology,
ritual and song. Indeed, what more obvious means of expression
could a simple group of people have? Here, in the Djanggawul
doctrine, are crystallized their hopes and desires, related to their
fundamental drives, co-ordinated with the natural resources and
phenomena and with the environment which they know.

Numerous references are made to the removal of the *rangga* 778
from the *ngainmara*, a symbolic allusion also to the removal of
children from the wombs of the Sisters: for *rangga* are likened 773
to children, or human beings, and men and women may use this 182
term to refer to their bones. The spiritual content of the bones
is the same as that of the sacred *rangga*, and has, moreover, been
passed on from their ancestors—those who were originally removed
from the Sisters. When, for example, postulants enter the sacred
hut (= *ngainmara* = uterus) on the ritual ground, they are like
rangga being hidden away within the *ngainmara*. In a polygynous 595
marriage, too, the wives are said to be like *rangga*: their husband
has collected them into a group, and has a monopoly over them as
a man has over his individual *rangga*. This likening of women to 562
sacred *rangga* is interesting, but probably derives from the fact that
women themselves are said to be the source of ritual knowledge,[1]
and consequently sacred.

There is much stress, too, on the maternal qualities of the 831
Djanggawul Sisters, although the Brother himself is of considerable
importance. The Two Sisters are mentioned far more frequently, 776
particularly in the Milingimbi version of the cycle, although this

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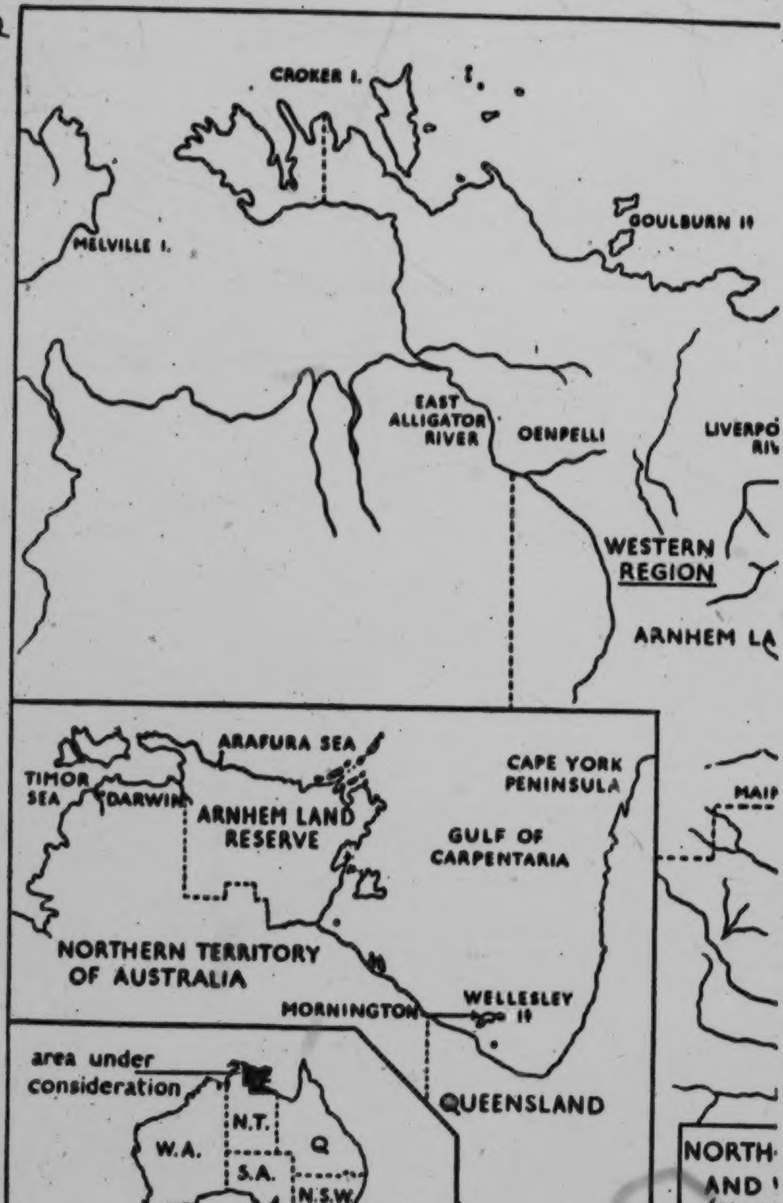
[1] *Vide* Chapters 2 and 3. (See also M. Mead, *Male and Female*, London, 1950, pp. 102–3.)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TIMOR SEA
DARWIN
ARNHEM LAND RESERVE
CAPE YORK PENINSULA
GULF OF CARPENTARIA
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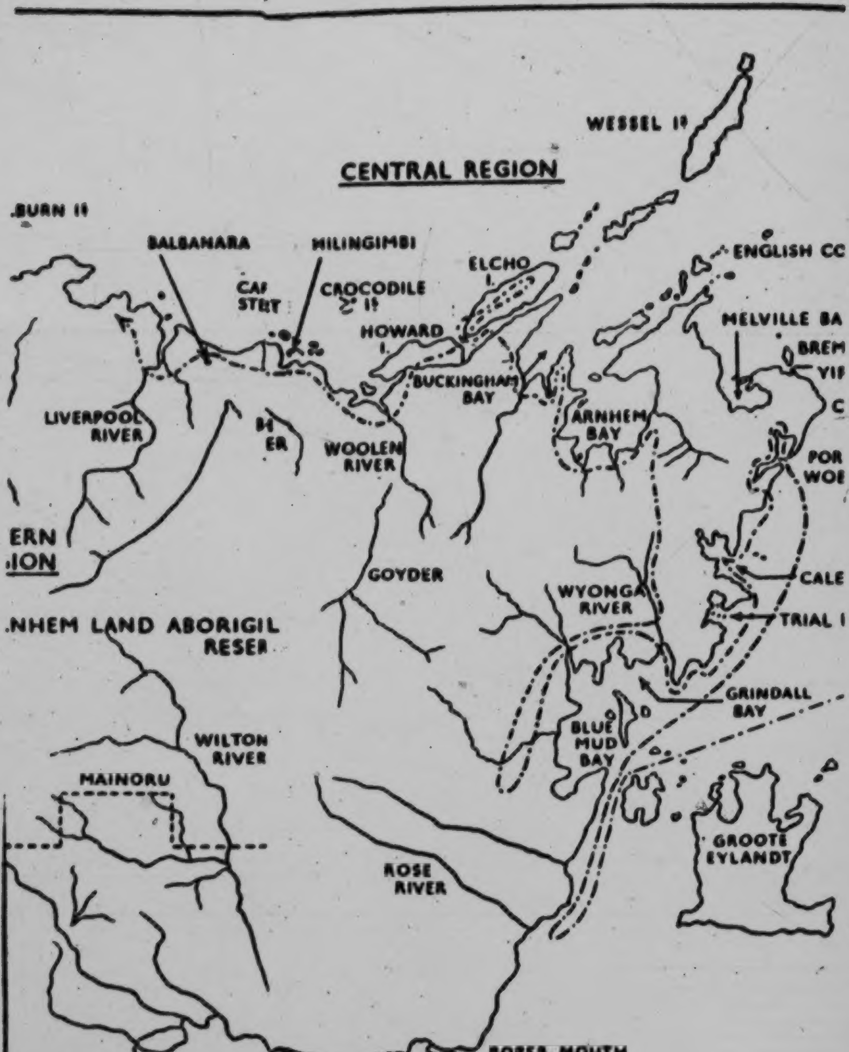
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WILTON RIVER
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BLUE MUD BAY
MAINORU
GROOTE EYLANDT
ROSE RIVER
ROPER MOUTH
SIR EDW
NORTH-EASTERN, NRTH-CENTRAL AND WESTERN ANHEM LAND
(Northern Territory Australia)
journey of the Djanggawul
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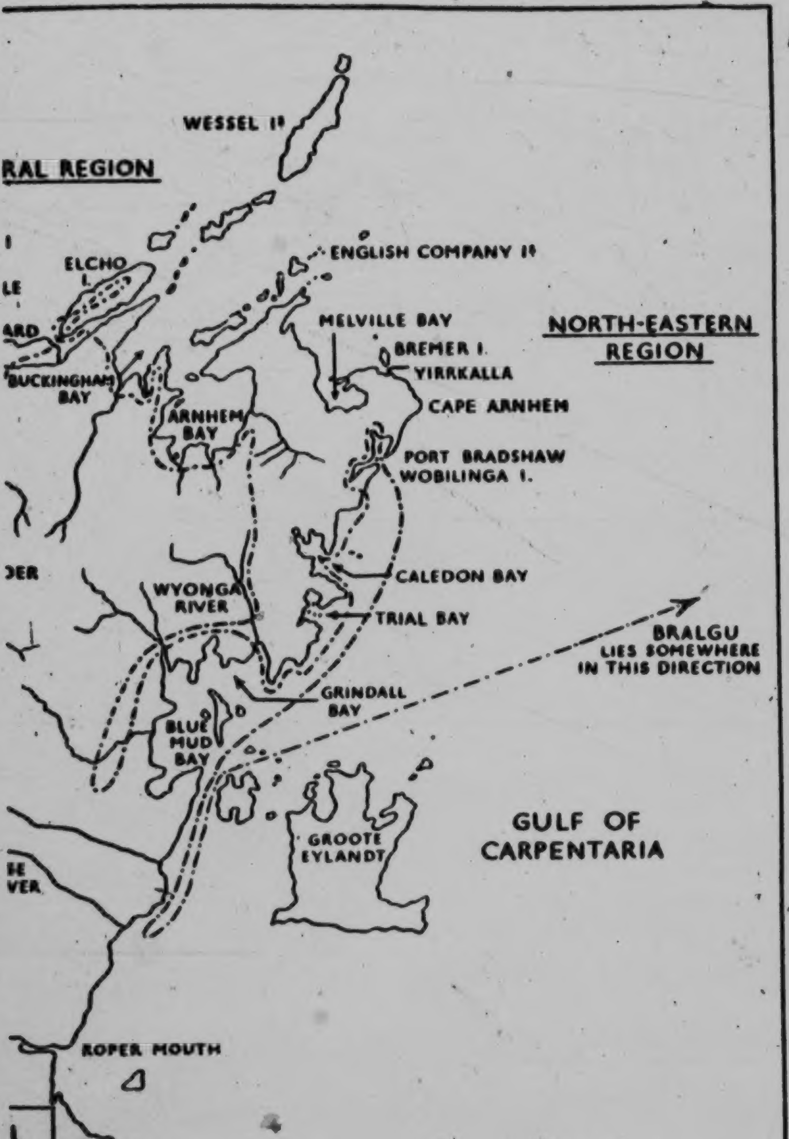
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BUCKINGHAM BAY
ARNHEM BAY
CAPE ARNHEM
PORT BRADSHAW
WOBILINGA I.
DER
CALEDON BAY
WYONGA RIVER
TRIAL BAY
BRALGU
LIES SOMEWHERE IN THIS DIRECTION
GRINDALL BAY
BLUE MUD BAY
GULF OF CARPENTARIA
GROOTE EYLANDT
RE
VER
ROPER MOUTH
L
SIR EDWARD PELLEW GROUP
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831 is a predominantly patrilineal society. The Two Sisters are Original Mothers of the various *dua* moiety clansfolk, as well as of the
776 *jiritja*. They are Mother Goddesses in the true sense of the term, for although they were allegedly instrumental in populating the greater part of eastern Arnhem Land, they are responsible also for all subsequent fertility. Aborigines call the Sisters 'Our Mothers'. When men cut the fringe of their sacred dilly bags, or perform ritual, they are the 'Sons of the Djanggawul'; when they enter the sacred ground, marked out in a special way, they are returning to their Mothers' uteri; when they enter the sacred hut on the ritual ground, they are also returning to their Mothers' uteri (or uterus, when one hut is used, referring to the elder Sister). The same theme is expressed symbolically in a variety of ways. The whole concept of the return to the Mother on ritual occasions is particularly interesting;[1] but we shall not digress to discuss the theoretical interpretation, as favoured by some modern psychoanalytic schools of thought.

113 The most important focal point of interest in the Djanggawul myth and songs is procreation, and its ramifications. In some draw-
532 ings from Yirrkalla the Two Sisters are depicted with people (or
831 children) 'flowing' out from their vulvae. Their legs are apart and flexed, their eyes open with tears running from the pain of child-
776 birth. This concept of people flowing from the Mothers' uteri is used in western-central Northern Territory in reference to the Kunapipi Mother,[2] who is also said to 'let postulants out from her womb during ceremonial time'. (This same theme is expressed, both symbolically and directly, at Yirrkalla and Millingimbi.) The relationship between the Djanggawul and the Kunapipi Mother is an interesting question, which unfortunately cannot be treated here.[3]

831 The Djanggawul were possessed of abnormally long genitalia. The Brother had an elongated penis, emphasizing, through exaggera-
776 tion, his masculine function in the fertility scheme. The Two Sisters had abnormally long clitorises,[4] a feature more difficult to explain. The Aborigines themselves offer no explanation, except that the *rangga* may have been derived from them. For example, when the penis and clitorises were eventually foreshortened, the

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[1] *Vide* R. Berndt, *Kunapipi*.

[2] *Vide* R. Berndt, *op. cit.*, Chapters II–IV, IX, and R. and C. Berndt, 'The Eternal Ones of the Dream' (being a discussion of Dr. G. Róheim's book of that name), *Oceania*, Vol. XVII, No. 1, pp. 67–78, three plates.

[3] Some mention has been made of this in *Kunapipi*, Chapters I *c* and III.

[4] *Vide* Chapters 2 and 3. The significance of the Sisters' clitorises is revealed in the songs.

severed parts became *rangga* or feathered strings, which are also 831
regarded as *rangga*. An interesting interpretation was made by one
informant, himself a ceremonial leader. Within historic times, he 776
said, a certain man was born with both vagina and penis, and with
breasts like a woman; he was bi-sexual and produced a child, after
which he died. Commenting on this example, which was told to
him by a grandparent, the informant suggested that these Djanggawul
Sisters may have originally been bi-sexual, so that their clitorises
were actually penes which they used to impregnate themselves
by inserting into the vagina; for the 'clitoris-penes' were sufficiently
long to curve round and use for coitus. The same informant stated
that the Djanggawul Brother may possibly have been introduced
later. This is, however, the tentative interpretation of one man,
and does not represent group opinion.

The presence of elongated clitorises can possibly be explained 831
in terms of the tendency to accentuate a female organ (as has been 776
done in the case of the male); or they may, symbolically, represent
the umbilical cord (as in the Song Cycle). The former explanation 833
seems to be more probable, for much stress is placed on the erectness 839
of a woman's clitoris during coitus,[1] while the clitorises of many
Aboriginal women are fairly well developed; they are played with
and handled by women from pre-adolescent days, in an endeavour
to increase their size, so attracting the attentions of men and
heightening their sexual satisfaction. In other drawings from the 831
Yirrkalla area, the Djanggawul Sisters have long clitorises, dragging
on the ground. In one illustration we see the Two Sisters with 532
elongated clitorises, and the Brother with his long penis; they are 776
holding *rangga*, and people are coming out to be placed on a
ngainmara mat. The same drawing shows the Wauwalak Sisters,[2]
who are the daughters of the Djanggawul, while the Brother puts
his hand into the Sisters' wombs to remove the people. The Brother's
inserting his hand into the uteri, to remove the people (children),
is compared with his putting his hand into the *ngainmara* to remove
the sacred *rangga*. Further, it suggests that the Sisters did not
invariably give birth to such people in the normal way. The
Brother's action in inserting his hand merely accentuates the theme
by introducing a further point, which can be more easily represented
in symbolism—that is, by the *rangga* and *ngainmara*, illustrating
the phenomenon of childbirth.

Professor Lloyd Warner was the first to note the presence of the 114
Djanggawul (which he called Djunkgao) cult, presenting this 194

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[1] *Vide* R. Berndt, *Love Songs of Arnhem Land*, for publication.

[2] The Wauwalak Sisters sponsor all *Kunapipi*, *ngurlmag* and *djunggawon* ritual. *Vide* R. Berndt, *Kunapipi*, Chapters I c, III and IV.

114 794 material in his book, *A Black Civilization.*[1] The content of the myth which he presents will be discussed in the following chapter (3); here we are concerned with his analysis. He treated the Djanggawul in the same manner as he did the Wauwalak constellation. His opinion was that the Djanggawul cult was not so well integrated as that of the Wauwalak; and he wrongly assumed that it was merely one part of a larger cycle of stories centring around the movements of the ocean tides, and the floods of the rainy season.[2] This misinterpretation seems to have resulted from inadequate documentation. The myth and rituals, as he describes them, are incomplete, and the great song cycle is virtually ignored. However, even if we cannot accept Warner's assumptions concerning the significance and fundamental meaning of the cult, we must recognize the value of his descriptions, particularly as regards observational material, relating to the rituals.[3] Comparing the Djanggawul with the Wauwalak,[4] Warner concludes that both are very much the same in content. We, on the contrary, contend that although both have the same basic significance, stressing fertility, and being concerned with sexual functions and with peculiarly female characteristics, the relevant 'plots' are in themselves dissimilar.[5] They differ in many important details, which need not be tabulated here.

The essential distinction between the two is the fact that the Djanggawul are concerned with procreation, while the Wauwalak are, so to speak, interested in maintaining the *status quo.* The Wauwalak are not assumed to have 'brought into being' all life, as are the Djanggawul; they symbolically re-enact the situation, but are not the creators of it. In native epistemological doctrine this distinction is clearly defined. The Djanggawul came first, the Wauwalak later. It is, nevertheless, a debatable point whether or not the Djanggawul have influenced Aboriginal behaviour more than the Wauwalak. True, the latter have inspired at least three separate rituals; but to counterbalance this the Djanggawul remain aloof in inspiring the great *nara,* which in the ritual sense is much 'higher' than any of the Wauwalak ceremonies.

Warner, however, stressed the 'identification of the two myths and the fundamental sameness of the two rituals.'[6] The rituals do differ considerably, as do elements in the myths, but each does help us to understand the deeper significance of the other. The many totems that appear in the Djanggawul, and also in other myths, serve, as Warner also noted,[1] as concrete expression of the underlying concepts of Arnhem Land society, in its relation to nature and to its own institutions; and we find that these concepts are deeply embedded in the myth. They are thus part of the myth, and so subject to interpretation through ritual. But in Chapter 5 we shall discuss something of the Djanggawul's association with totemism. Totemism is relevant, but subsidiary, to the basic significance of the myth. The point that totemism is a philosophy and not a religion, that its manifestations in the ritual provide material crystallizations of religious concepts, must be kept in mind.

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[1] W. L. Warner, *op. cit.,* pp. 335–36, 399–403, 406–7.

[2] W. L. Warner, *op. cit.,* p. 335.

[3] W. L. Warner, *op. cit.,* pp. 340–56.

[4] W. L. Warner, *op. cit.,* pp. 399–403.

[5] Compare the full Djanggawul myth presented in Chapter 2 of this volume with the Wauwalak mythology set out in *Kunapipi* (R. Berndt), Chapter III.

[6] W. L. Warner, *op. cit.,* p. 399.

That the Djanggawul myth should express the fundamental idea of the backward and forward movements of the tides in the spring floods, either in the present era or in the mythological past,[2] is not made clear in Warner's discussion. The presence of water in the myth is quite a logical feature, for salt and fresh water, like tides and floods, are part of the environment; they are important in much the same degree as other natural phenomena. All of these are drawn into the underlying theme of the Djanggawul, for it is intimately concerned with all fertility, and with all the elements that make possible the continuance of the state of existence known to the Aborigines. That is to say, to bring about fertility (an aspect which, expressed consciously or otherwise, seems to predominate both in the minds of the natives and in their ritual symbolism), the sequence of the seasons must be assured; and this assurance, or the desire to attain it, is expressed symbolically in both myth and songs and materially in totemic manifestation. Warner suggests[3] that the rise and fall of the water in clan wells 'is something more than the symbolization of the flood as male and spiritual'. It is, according to him, 'an actual outflow of water from the sacred centres of the land, which causes the growth of new plants and animals and the refertilizing of the earth. It is the male principle fertilizing the earth.' This aspect receives some treatment in the myth and songs; and excluding his flood concept, and the idea that the male alone is 'spiritual' (a word, incidentally, which needs definition), this is very much what is actually involved. Warner, however, influenced by Durkheimian theory, by his ideas about ceremonial purification, and woman's ritual uncleanliness, has confused the

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[1] W. L. Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 401.

[2] W. L. Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 402.

[3] *op. cit.*, p. 402.

114 794 issues. The concept that woman is profane, in comparison with man the sacred, is not a feature of eastern Arnhem Land religious or lay thought.

796 182 [535] The symbolism in the myth and songs makes clear the intentions of the relevant ritual. In the *dua* moiety *nara*, as an expression of the Djanggawul ideology, the major incidents of the myth are re-enacted in symbolic form. Much of this ritual is taken up with totemic dancing; and the animals, birds, reptiles and vegetable matter danced are totemic in so far that they relate directly or indirectly to the dominant theme. Further, these totems are not used only in relation to the Djanggawul, but are part of the spiritual heritage of the *dua* moiety linguistic groups and clans, which in turn are associated with the Djanggawul.

796 616 *Dua nara* rituals are all inspired by the Djanggawul, although at times irrelevant elements enter; for example, other *dua* spirits or Ancestral Beings of minor importance become associated with the main theme, or *jiritja* moiety elements appear from time to time in the myth. But the Djanggawul are *dua*, and their ceremonies are solely of the *dua nara*, and not (as Warner mentions)[1] of both *dua* and *jiritja*. The latter are inspired by their own separate ideology, and by the Laintjung and Banaitja Ancestral Beings; and although similar in many points, they are basically different. However, it is the practice for some *jiritja* men (maternally related to the *dua* moiety) to help out *dua* postulants, or vice versa: and it is usual for both moieties to hold their own particular rituals at approximately the same time. At Yirrkalla, separate ceremonial grounds and separate huts are used by each moiety; but in the western Arnhem Land variant of the *nara* rituals the same ground is used, although each moiety has its separate hut (or shade), which may or may not adjoin that of the other. In eastern Arnhem Land, the ritual demarcation between the moieties is particularly noticeable.

796 794 885 The *dua*, and for that matter the *jiritja*, *nara* are the most important religious ceremonies of eastern Arnhem Land. Being far more important that the *kunapipi*, *ngurlmag* and *djunggawon*, they are not concerned with age-grading in the same sense that other initiation rituals are. They are primarily revelatory in character; and although novices are received, they are rather neophytes who are already fully initiated into manhood, and already possessed of a certain amount of religious knowledge. By the time a man sees his first *nara* he is well past adolescence, and usually married; he would normally be expected to have already seen the *ngurlmag*; and to be taking a major part in *djunggawon* dancing, as well as in that of the *kunapipi*, although the latter is optional.

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[1] *op. cit.*, p. 340.

Significance of the Djanggawul

Long before the actual rituals commence, men go out to the 796 sacred ground to prepare the objects. The wooden poles and 794 posts are removed from their hiding places in the water or mud, and weeks are spent in re-painting them. Women are asked to prepare long feathered strings, which are never directly given to the men, but always 'stolen' by them. This is conventional behaviour, and relates to the Djanggawul Brother and his companions' stealing the sacred *rangga*, bags and so on from the Two Sisters in the beginning (see Chapter 2). The preliminary preparations take weeks, and are accompanied by singing and invocations. Neophytes are brought in from time to time, and their chests painted [302] with sacred clan designs: they continue to wear these when they return to the camp, and never wash or rub them off, but allow them to fade naturally. In this way the neophytes contract many ritual obligations, since they must recompense their 'initiators'—that is, those who are revealing the mysteries to them. They must also [784] observe a number of tabus relating to their general behaviour, and to the partaking of food.[1] Later, the same neophytes are shown the *rangga* emblems and their designs, and the meanings are explained to them.

By this time, the neophytes have reached the stage when they are regarded as being eligible to witness the first ceremonies. The sacred ground has been prepared, the shade erected and the objects completed. A sacred aura is now said to pervade the ritual ground, and the spiritual presence of the Djanggawul is assured.

The ceremonies which now begin are not seen completely by 796 those neophytes who are brought to the ground for the first time. 794 Years may pass before the complete series has been revealed to them, and it is not as a rule until they have reached middle age 561 that they may take an active part in the ritual. Sometimes, however, younger men who show particular aptitude for religious discussion, dancing and singing, are accepted much earlier. There is always a need for young and energetic dancers and actors; and the older men, by allowing the younger men a degree of active participation, cement their adherence to the cult and so reinforce their own position. But even when younger men dance or act, older men are the organizers, and it is their duty to show the way to the other. They, the older men, are always acknowledged to possess greater knowledge of these matters, to be in a position to impart that knowledge. The older men, when they do dance or act, are almost invariably more proficient than the younger men; and although there is a tendency to-day to allow the younger men a greater measure of participation, it still takes years before a neophyte may be legitimately classified as an initiate.

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[1] The economic aspect of the *nara* rituals cannot, unfortunately, be dealt with here.

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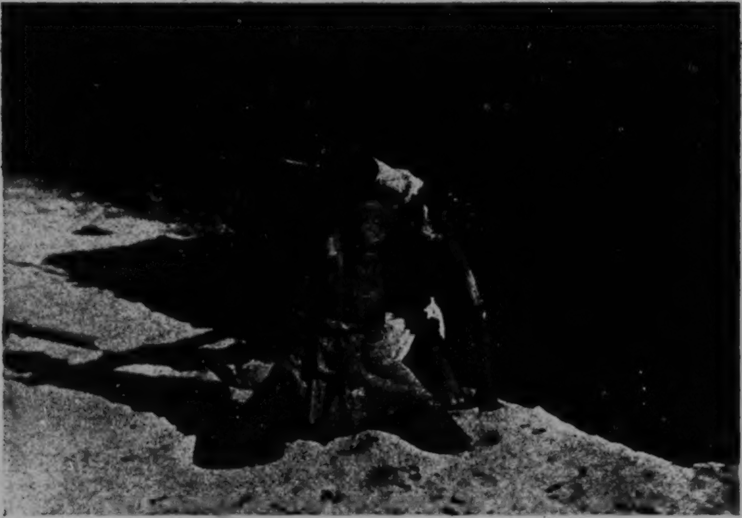

1. Postulants emerge from the sacred shade, carrying emblems.

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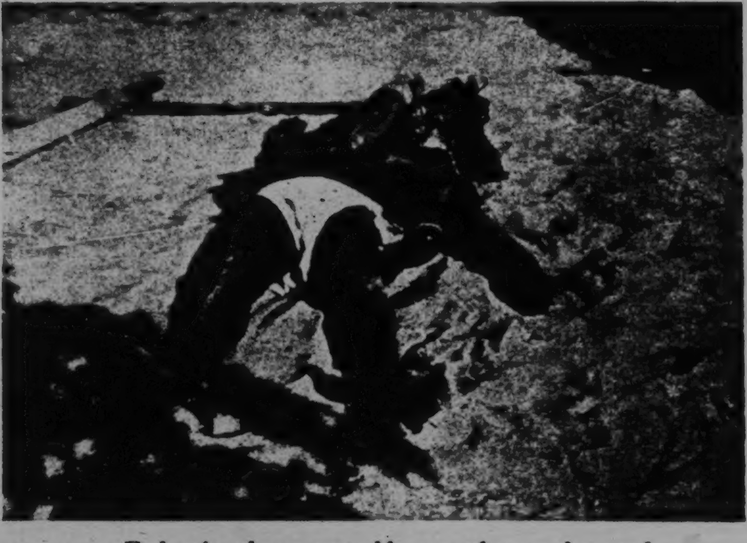

2. Embracing the *rangga* emblems on the sacred ground.

[FACING p. 16]

Significance of the Djanggawul

796 Warner has already set out briefly something of the procedure in this *nara* ritual;[1] although his descriptions are based on observation of these twenty-one years ago, to-day they appear to have been little changed. Although in this volume we are not concerned primarily with the ritual expressions of the Djanggawul myth and songs, it is nevertheless necessary to present briefly the sequence of the ritual and its significance. This will throw the rest of our material into relief, and serve to accentuate basic meanings.[2]

a. The sacred ground is formed, the shade constructed, and various members and ceremonial leaders of the *dua* groups prepare the *rangga* emblems. (See above.) The shade of branches on a framework of wood symbolizes the *ngainmara* or uterus of either Djanggawul Sister (it is said to signify, in one, the uteri of both the younger and older Sisters). The initiates themselves are symbolically *rangga*, or 'the Children of the Sisters'; they represent too the Brother and his companions (who were themselves the Sisters' children). The ground is also a projection of the uterus concept.

The first dances are always those relating to the rise and fall of the surf, and the sound of the sea. These refer to the Djanggawul's paddling across the sea from Bralgu to Port Bradshaw, and are treated in the myth and songs. At intervals throughout this dancing, and during all the *nara* ceremonies, invocations (*bugali*) are called. These, by the terms used, bring into perspective relevant sections of what is being enacted. Furthermore, they are thought to create an aura of sacredness, by spiritually conjuring up the Djanggawul themselves, and their pervading power. All *bugali* invocations are made up of sacred 'inside' words,[3] and numerous examples exist in the song cycles (see, for example, textual material treated separately in Volume 2 of this work). The same participants leave the ground and enter the main camp, and again call out invocations within the hearing of all. Women are said not to know the hidden
796 meanings, but are quite well aware of much of their significance:
562 *vide* Djanggawul myth relating to the loss of the *rangga* and bags by the Sisters. Women feed the men, who then return to the sacred ground. The rôle of the women during this part, and during the whole ritual series, is to provide participants and postulants with food: traditionally, this is cycad palm nut 'bread', supplemented by a variety of edible meats, vegetables and fruits. This is in accordance with the rôle undertaken by the Two Sisters after their

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[1] *op. cit.*, pp. 340-56.

[2] Full descriptions of the *dua nara* will be presented later. Compare the differences between these rituals and those associated with the *kunapipi*: *vide Kunapipi*, Chapter IV.

[3] W. L. Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 341: this writer calls these 'power' names.

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3. *Rangga* folk emerge from the Djanggawul Sisters.

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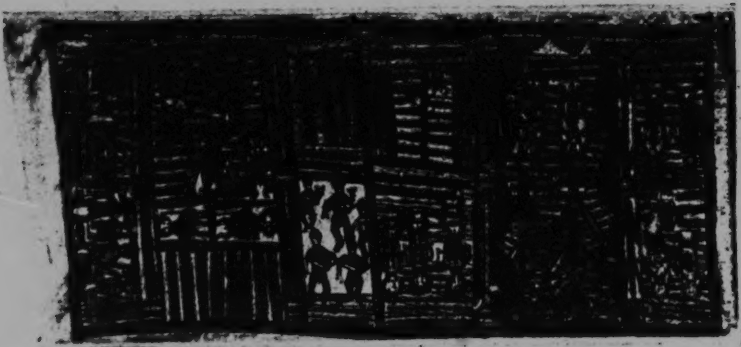

4. Various phases of the *nara* Djanggawul ceremonies.

[Facing p. 17]

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sacred possessions were lost, a rôle which before this loss belonged [562] to the men.

The sequence of the preceding ritual depends on the completion of the many *rangga*, the availability of men and neophytes, the abundance of red ochre and parakeet breast feathers, and the amount of food collected by the women. Although much of the latter is collected throughout the ceremonies, cycad 'bread' is stored, and its preparation commences weeks before the first rituals begin.

Just after the first ceremonies, people from other groups come to the main camp where the *nara* is being held. They have been summoned by specially designed message sticks, feathered string, [202] or miniature copies of *rangga* objects moulded from wild honey wax. Ideally, at this point, all the *rangga* should be ready; but in practice, painting of the objects usually continues for some time, and visitors make and paint additional emblems. All these *rangga* relate to various features of the Djanggawul myth: the *rangga* brought by the Djanggawul; representations of the Djanggawul themselves, or their separate organs; natural phenomena; or totemic objects and species associated with the Djanggawul. Incidentally, the majority of the dances enact something of the behaviour of totemic species, and are carried out with the *rangga*.

When initially, at the onset of the ritual, the *rangga* are removed from the water or mud they are said to be like, firstly, *rangga* removed from the *ngainmara*, and secondly, children removed from the Sisters' wombs. Placing one's arm (or hand) into the water or mud to remove the *rangga* is like the Djanggawul Brother's inserting his hand into the vaginae of the Sisters to remove the children. The sacred clan patterns drawn with ochres on the objects are 796 derived from water marks, which the Djanggawul's original *rangga* 532 acquired during their journey in the bark canoe from Bralgu. Alternatively, these patterns symbolize 'womb marks' on a new-born child. Ochre is symbolic of blood, or the sun's rays, or the warmth of a fire: blood from afterbirth, rays of sun from the *dagu* vagina disc of the sun, and fire (warmth) from the sun. The red breast feathers of the parakeet are symbolic of the sun's rays, of blood, or of an umbilical cord. The reiteration of dancing associated 796 with the sea in every case signifies the great importance of the Djanggawul's landing at Jelangbara, which is one of the most sacred sites associated with these Beings. The singing of water from the sacred waterholes refers to these Beings inserting their *rangga*, and removing them so that water will gush forth; this is symbolic of coitus, and the rise of water is the flow of semen which fertilized both human beings and the earth. It represents, too, the

196 coming of the heavy rains of the wet season, which is viewed as a period of fertilization.[1]

b. The first ceremonies which take place after the arrival of the visitors are related mainly to totemic species, and do not usually involve use of the *rangga* emblems, which are nearly always retained
[887] till later ceremonies. Older men organize all these rituals and
instruct neophytes. When actors are not carrying out the traditional actions with sufficient skill, they often take over themselves to demonstrate just how it should be done. Both *dua* and *jiritja* neo-
[302] phytes are present. There is also a ceremonial shaving of facial
hair; older men leave short tufts or beards that symbolically represent the fringe of the *ngainmara* mat (= pubic hair of the Sisters), and attach red parakeet feathers, like the *rangga* pendant strings. (That is, as the *rangga* have feathered pendants attached to them, so also do men, because they approximate *rangga*—see above.)

c. In the main camp women and young children, and uninitiated youths, gather in a cleared place where they are covered with *ngainmara* mats. This symbolically represents the unborn children of the Djanggawul Sisters, lying in the uteri (or children in the *ngainmara*, or *rangga* hidden in the *ngainmara* or bags; *vide* myth and songs). The men dance from the sacred ground and surround them, carrying spears, womeras and sticks. Invocations are called, most of which refer to places where the Djanggawul Sisters gave birth to the people; they include also sacred 'inside' terms for the *ngainmara*, and for the sacred wells, billabongs or waterholes, for the *rangga* objects, and for the spears and sticks which the men carry. Ancestral names are called too, as well as the 'inside' names of various men taking part in the ritual. Surrounding the people covered by the *ngainmara* mats, the men poke them with their spears and sticks, and they wriggle in response.

The men then dance, calling out sacred *bugali* terms for childbirth, sexual intercourse and so on. Then the women, children and youths emerge from their *ngainmara*, and sit watching the men. Final calling of *bugali* completes the ceremony.

Interpreting this ritual, Aborigines say that the women crouching
196 under the mats are the children of the Sisters; they are 'poked' by
831 the men and wriggle 'like children in a womb'. The poking with spears and sticks signifies the Djanggawul Brother's penis, which causes the pregnancy of his Sisters and the subsequent 'wriggling' of the children. Alternatively, the spears and sticks symbolize the *rangga*, and the 'poking' their replacement in the *ngainmara*. The casting aside of the *ngainmara* represents the birth of the children of Djanggawul, or conversely, the removal of *rangga* (symbolically,

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[1] *Vide* W. L. Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 343.

the birth). Or again, the fact that the women are covered by the 796 *ngainmara* refers to the Djanggawul's placing all females, at birth, 831 beneath the *ngainmara* for protection. The men are left out because they were originally placed by the Djanggawul in the coarse grass, and were unprotected: *vide* myth, Chapters 2 and 3. Underlying this ceremony is the idea that the symbolic act of childbirth will be imitated and repeated in real life, so that universal fertility may result.

d. More totemic dances take place on the sacred ground, and 796 continue for some weeks. Various sections of the myth are enacted; 535 for example, there are all the natural species seen at each place through which the Djanggawul passed (see myth). Two or three weeks may be given over to the performance of all the events that happened at one place. During all these ceremonies, the women provide food for the men. Outstanding dances are those of the *djanda* goanna, the *djalga* water goanna, the *lindaridj* parakeet, and spring water, the latter deriving from the *rangga*'s being plunged into the ground by the Djanggawul. At this stage certain *rangga* are used in dancing or posturing. The major, or fundamental *rangga* brought by the Djanggawul from Bralgu, are used by individual dancers, or by groups of actors who writhe along the ground with the *rangga* clasped to their bodies or held in ritual ways. All the dancers emerge from the sacred shade in which the *rangga* are kept, to the accompaniment of singing, or simply to the rhythm of the clapping sticks. Some of the most important emerge in silence; intense reverence is shown in all ritual in which the *rangga* are used.

e. Women gather around a tree or forked stick in the main camp. Men come down from the sacred ground, and the women answer their ritual cries. The ceremonial leader climbs the tree or forked stick and to the accompaniment of clapping sticks invokes the sacred *bugali*. In the western variant of this (that is, the Gunwinggu *mareiin* cult), all women and neophytes are 'steamed' over a special structure, but this does not occur in eastern Arnhem Land. The women, all painted, dance around the tree as the invocations are called. Nearly all the *bugali* are related to places and to totemic species. Pairs of dancers then enact various totemic creatures, dancing near the tree or forked stick and in front of the women. That completes the ceremony. This is continued for a period until finally the men come at night to the main camp bearing flaming torches.

The fire symbolizes that which the Sisters thought had destroyed their sacred bags containing the *rangga*, only to find later that they had been stolen by the men (see Chapter 2). Further, it signifies parakeet feathers, or the warmth of the sun, which is not present during the night.

796 535 The women dancing around the tree or forked stick represent the Djanggawul Sisters, and the tree is the *djuda* tree (of life-giving properties) and also *rangga* (that is, tree = forked-stick = *djuda rangga* = penis). They dance around, inserting their sacred *ganinjari rangga* yam sticks into the ground, so that water may gush forth (that is, symbolic coitus). The dancing of totemic species before the women at the tree or forked stick is like the dancing by the Djanggawul women in their own sacred shade, within the hearing of the men, but without their participation (*vide* myth). Later the men reverse this situation, and it is the men who dance in their own shade, while the Two Sisters go some distance away.

f. At this juncture there is a repetition of the *ngainmara* ritual, when all the women, children and youths are hidden under the mats. The men dance around them, carrying out the same actions as in section *e*, and the ritual has the same significance.

g. More totemic dances are carried out on the sacred ground, particularly in conjunction with *rangga* objects. Young neophytes see only the secondary *rangga* and totem dances; for all these are graded, and it depends on a man's age, his influence, and his degree of acceptance into the cult, whether he sees the really 'high' or most revered *rangga*. The 'high' *rangga* (particularly the elaborately decorated *djuda*, *djanda*, *ganinjari* and *mainmulan*) are lovingly handled, caressed and sung over by ceremonial leaders. Minor *rangga* and dancing viewed by neophytes bring to them simultaneously a series of associated tabus, relating to eating meat or flesh of the totems which they view, and obliges them to present gifts later on to the leaders. Neophytes, when watching these dances, are usually painted [302] with sacred clan patterns. 'They are painted like dead men, for their spirit must enter the eternal stream in which the Djanggawul are an ever-present influence'—an eternal stream, moreover, that has no limitations of time or space, all being merged into one: the Creative Beings themselves, the *wongar* Dreaming Spirits and totems, the ancestors, the recently dead and the living.

796 *h*. The next ritual, a group effort, should normally complete the *nara* rituals. This is the ceremonial bathing by men, women and children. In western Arnhem Land, in the *mareiin* rituals (counterpart of the *nara*) it is the terminating rite, but sometimes is omitted altogether. At Milingimbi it may be a terminating rite, or others may follow it. At Yirrkalla it may be omitted altogether, or used as a terminating rite, or it may be followed by further ceremonies. This ceremonial bathing may take place in a billabong, water-hole, river, or in the adjacent sea; that is, it does not seem to be important whether fresh or salt water is used.

796 535 Men, representing geese or diving ducks, dance down to the

bank of the billabong or beach; then, followed by all the other 796
members of the camp, they plunge into the water. Each person 535
washes himself (or herself), and invocations are called. They all emerge, and the men dance various totemic fish.

This ritual act symbolically represents firstly the *rangga* (= people) 796
who become wet while being brought in the Djanggawul's bark canoe from Bralgu. Secondly they, the people, are likened to *rangga*, being plunged into the water (that is, when *rangga* are not in use, or at the conclusion of the rituals, they are hidden in the water or mud, and the people's bathing represents completion of the *nara*). It has also been interpreted to mean that the Djanggawul enter 796
the water to collect fish in their net: *vide* myth, when the Two
Sisters enter the water and, opening their legs, bend forward to 831
use them as a fish-catchment. To catch fish in this way, using one's legs as a net, is, moreover, symbolic of coitus: the fish caught are penes (penis of the Djanggawul Brother).[1] Thus, men perform the fish dances after emerging from the water. It also represents the *rangga*'s being inserted into sacred waterholes and billabongs, as was the habit of the Djanggawul; 'they put these *rangga* into wells and so on, leaving them for the new generation.'

Warner[2] mentions that the ritual bathing represents the removal 796
of 'semen'; that is, through the 'incestuous rape of the younger
Sister'. This latter conception is not found in any of our versions. 831
Nevertheless, water may signify semen, and thus be a symbol of 114
fertility, just as is the 'foam' of the sea mentioned in the Song Series. The assumption that the women cleanse themselves by washing[3] does not follow from our versions; for all people bathe, not only the women. The lay interpretation of any ritual bathing or washing, whether involving complete immersion or just 'baptism' by anointing with water (also fairly common), is cleansing or purification, in the sense that the sacred aura (which is ritually contagious, and can do harm if not controlled immediately after a ritual), is, for the time being at least, diverted back into the 'eternal stream' (see above). All sacred clan patterns painted on men's bodies, and the complementary sacred patterns on the breasts of women, are removed in this way, thus signifying that the *nara* is nearing completion.

i. Again the 'higher' totem dances and *rangga* emblems are shown 796
to various neophytes in different stages of initiation. All these ceremonies are revelatory in character. These rituals then are divided into two main parts—1, those rituals shown to the younger

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[1] Also used in everyday speech to refer to coitus—thus a woman 'nets a fish'.

[2] W. L. Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 333.

[3] W. L. Warner, *op. cit.*, pp. 333-4.

796 neophytes, and, 2, those shown only to the older, fully initiated men who are intimately acquainted with all phases of the *nara* and of the Djanggawul doctrine. These latter rituals, involving meditation and theological discussions, are the most impressive of all. At this time, too, the sacred feathered string is removed and [616 presented to members of the opposite moiety, as well as to younger 431] members in the right line of descent from the ceremonial leaders; that is, a *gudara* (sister's daughter's son) gives to a *mari* (mother's mother's brother) or vice versa.

796 118 *j*. This is followed, soon afterwards, by sacramental eating of the sacred cycad palm nut 'bread'. All the preparation of this 'bread' has been undertaken by the women. It is taken out to the sacred ground where it is sung over, and the sacred *bugali* invoked. All the *bugali* of the country through which the Djanggawul passed, as well as their *rangga*, are called. The actual partaking of the 'bread' may be accompanied by the removal of feathered strings from the *rangga* emblems. This symbolizes the meeting of the Djanggawul with Buralindjingu at Dambojowoi (*vide* myth) when, after the Sisters had had their clitorises foreshortened (that is, the removing of the feathered strings from the *rangga*), they were treated as *galibingu* novices, and palm nut 'bread' was eaten sacramentally. But sacred 'bread' has an additional significance. It is a symbol of all food resources; and when the sacred *bugali* are invoked over it, it becomes possessed of a sacred quality which approximates it to a *rangga* emblem. The eating of it (as a *rangga* emblem) means that initiates are absorbing the sacred qualities of their *rangga* becoming themselves 'more *rangga*', more fully absorbed into the Djanggawul ideology. Symbolically they enter (*rangga* = people) the uteri of the Sisters, so that they may subsequently be re-born, when they leave the sacred ground and terminate the *nara*. The eating of the bread creates a strong sacred bond of friendship between all participants: they become as one.

There are, however, many restrictions relating to the eating of this bread. Not all initiates eat from the same bread, but all those eating must be closely related to one another; for *bugali* names have been 'sung' into the bread, and their power remains in it, and cannot be indiscriminately passed around.

796 After final painting of initiates' bodies, the *nara* is brought to a close.

796 182 We see from these examples that ritual is the outward expression of the Djanggawul myth. It is primarily a re-enactment of the principal features of the Brother and Sisters' original journey through north-eastern and north-central Arnhem Land, and an

important form of expressing these is the totemic dancing in 796
conjunction with the sacred *rangga*. All these are correlated with the
basic theme. The main structure of the ritual refers symbolically 182
to the sexual sequence which culminates in the act of childbirth;
and this, in a variety of forms, is the focal point. It is completely
orthodox, for in it is contained the core, the basic thesis, of the
Djanggawul myth. By re-enacting the primal birth of their ancestors,
the Arnhem Landers convey the sense of 'tribal' (clan or
linguistic group) continuity: a continuity, moreover, which cannot
be broken unless the actual performance of the *nara* rituals is interrupted
or halted. That such an event as abandonment of the *nara* 796
could occur, *cannot* enter the minds of initiates, any more than we
could fully envisage the total collapse of our society and culture. 182
On the fringe of alien contact, of course, in towns or on mission 178
stations, this possibility may vaguely enter the minds of some;
but even these, though they may have taken part in only one *nara*,
cannot consider their utter abandonment. If the *nara* are performed
more irregularly to-day than two decades ago, the intention is
always present in the Aborigines' minds that, if possible, they
will be performed more frequently in the future. The Ancestral
Beings will continue to live, so say old informants, even if the life
that people know to-day should disappear altogether. The Gods
are not dependent on man for their survival, and the 'eternal
Dreaming stream' cannot be stemmed.

Upon this thesis rests the social aspect of the Djanggawul, for 182
re-enactment of the initial birth of the people expresses their in- 796
herent fertility, which by the grace of the Djanggawul can be
diffused to embrace a concept of universal fertility. Moreover, it
expresses the seasonal rhythm. The coming of the wet season,
with its rains, germinates the soil; foliage and vegetable matter,
and all the natural species, 'are re-born'. Because of the Djanggawul,
the natural resources of the land are ensured. Man, as a social
being, may continue the life he knows, in the way dictated traditionally
by the Gods. He is assured of survival.

Chapter Two

THE DJANGGAWUL MYTH[1]

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113 IN the beginning there were land and sky, animals and birds, foliage and trees. There was sea, too, in the waters of which were fish and other creatures; and upon the land were beings of totemic origin. All these things were there, as they had always been; but man, as we know him to-day, was not among them.

[115] Far out to sea, out of sight of the Arnhem Land mainland, was an island known as Bralgu (Bu'ralgu), the land of the Eternal Beings, which later became the home of the *dua* moiety dead. It lay to the south-east of Port Bradshaw, somewhere beyond Groote Eylandt.

It was here, at Bralgu, that the Djanggawul were living. They are said to have come from a big ceremony or meeting, in an unknown land far beyond the isle of Bralgu. On their arrival there they held another large ceremony, much larger than the contemporary *dua nara*, and used all their sacred objects. At that time they possessed a great many emblems, but only a few of these could be brought in the bark canoe to the Australian mainland.

They did not, however, spend very long at Bralgu, for it was only a 'half-way' resting place on the journey they were attempting.

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831 There were three of them: Djanggawul himself, his elder Sister, Bildjiwuraroiju, and his younger Sister, Miralaidj. With them, too, was another man, named Bralbral. The Two Sisters and their Brother, however, were nearly always known as the Djanggawul. Djanggawul himself had an elongated penis, and each of the Two Sisters had a long clitoris; these were so long that they dragged

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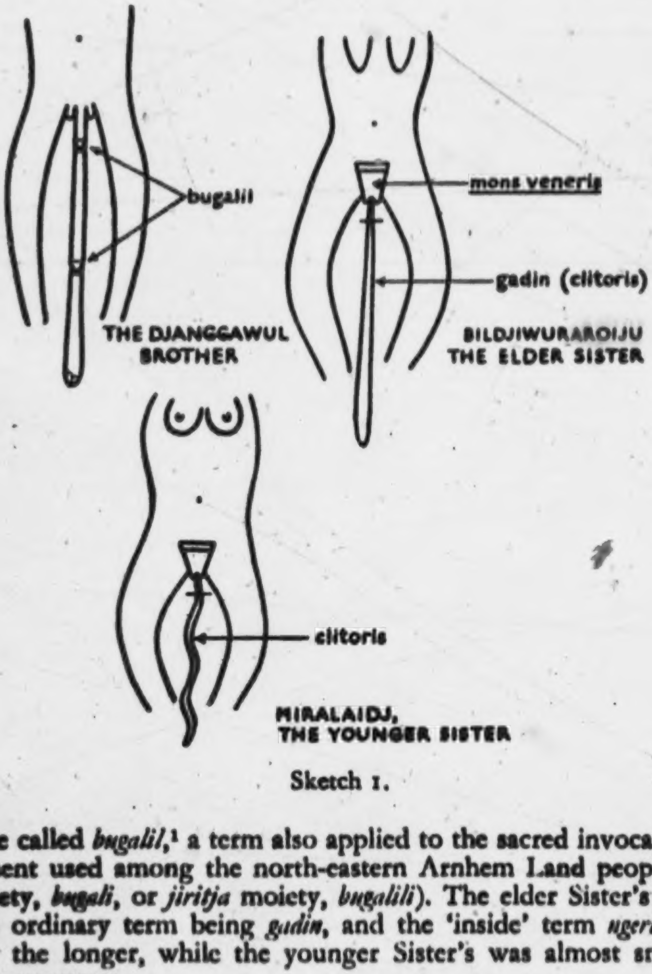
[1] The Yirrkalla version: this varies in certain points from the Milingimbi version, which will be presented later. *Vide Daughters of the Sun* (for publication).

upon the ground as they walked (see Sketch 1). The penis of Djanggawul, *gurlga* or *dulparu* (ordinary name for penis) had a long foreskin (*dabin*), suggesting that it had not been circumcised; at various intervals along the penis were notches, or penis 'rings or ridges', as on an ordinary penis towards the apex. These rings 773 831

THE DJANGGAWUL (from rough drawings by native informants)


bugalil
mons veneris
gadin (clitoris)
THE DJANGGAWUL BROTHER
BILDJIWURAROIJU THE ELDER SISTER
clitoris
MIRALAIDJ, THE YOUNGER SISTER

Sketch 1.

were called *bugalil*,[1] a term also applied to the sacred invocations at present used among the north-eastern Arnhem Land peoples (*dua* moiety, *bugali*, or *jiritja* moiety, *bugalili*). The elder Sister's clitoris (the ordinary term being *gadin*, and the 'inside' term *ngeribngerib*) was the longer, while the younger Sister's was almost snakelike in appearance.

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[1] The secular name for the penis ridge is *balbi* or *bapi*, 'snake'.

The Djanggawul Myth

773 At Bralgu, as they walked around with these, they left grooves in the ground from their dragging. And when the Djanggawul
831 Brother had coitus with his Sisters, he lifted aside their clitorises, entering them in the usual way. He was able to have incestuous relations with his Sisters, because at that time there were no marriage rules, no moieties, and no prohibitions. Djanggawul was the lawmaker. There is, however, no mention of Bralbral's having sexual relations with the Two Women. Djanggawul had been having coitus with Bildjiwuraroiju for a long time; her breasts had grown large and 'fallen down' with milk, and she had produced many children. Miralaidj, though, was quite young, having just passed puberty, and her breasts were rounded and firm.

They lived at Bralgu for some little time, putting people there, and leaving 'Dreamings' in the form of totemic designs, sacred emblems and body painting. They also instituted their rituals and
[778] ceremonies. The Brother's penis and the Sister's clitorises were sacred emblems, like *rangga* poles.

773 At last they made ready their bark canoe, and loaded it with 'Dreamings', sacred drawings and emblems; the latter were kept in a conically-shaped *ngainmara* mat. When all this was ready they themselves, with their companion Bralbral, climbed into the canoe. Then they paddled out to sea,[1] leaving the island of Bralgu far behind. For days and days they paddled, until they sighted the Arnhem Land mainland. At last they came to it, landing near Rose River. But they soon left this part of the country, and continued paddling along the coast until they reached Jelangbara, Port Bradshaw.

Near Gangudoi Island, while still in their canoe, the Ancestral Beings saw some trees,[2] in the branches of which were perched two *lindaridj* parakeet, drying themselves in the first rays of the sun. As they passed this island, the *djigai* morning pigeon was crying. 'Maybe that bird is crying out on the land,' said the Djanggawul, and so they sang about it. They saw, too, trepang on Bauwuling (or Bauwijara) Islands, and there were many *lindaridj* on Gagubam.
[778] A black cockatoo, immediately it caught sight of them, flew over to what are now the sacred sandhills near Ngadibaulwi (or Ngadibalji) rocks.

As the Djanggawul were nearing Port Bradshaw, and while
[778] they were still paddling, they could see the white foam from waves breaking around the sacred rock of Gulbinboi, just outside the entrance to the bay. As they looked they saw, too, myriads of small

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[1] It is said that they came on the crest of a huge wave, but Part 1 of the Song Cycle seems to contradict this.

[2] There are no trees on this island now.

lindaridj parakeets flying over the mainland, the sun's rays catching 773 the redness of their breast feathers. There was a constant roar of waves pounding on the beach. They paddled farther into the bay, coming to the Garingan rock, and saw the wide curving beach of Jelangbara. They sang with joy, and allowed the surf to take their canoe into the shallow water.

Then they dragged their canoe on to the beach and unloaded it, [778] making this a sacred place. Jelangbara is the largest Djanggawul centre in north-eastern Arnhem Land and, to-day, the most important.

Here the Djanggawul Brother wished to shorten his Sister's clitorises. But the elder Sister said, 'No, wait till we reach Arnhem Bay. We can have a good rest, and put Dreamings there.' So they walked around, still dragging the clitorises and elongated penis, leaving marks on the ground which may be seen to-day.

Leaving their canoe, the Djanggawul walked along the coast until they came to Ngadibalji, where they saw the *djawuldjawul* mangrove bird. Here too the Djanggawul Brother left his hairbelt, but retained the parakeet-feathered waist-band and arm-bands he was wearing. The hairbelt is now a long sandhill. On the sandhill, [823] were track marks of the *damurmindjari* (*damburindari* or *waburunggu*) wild duck; these birds were eating the *murnji*, or wild peanut roots. On the opposite side was a large barren sandhill, on the surface of which were tracks of the *djanda* goanna, as well as of many birds. A *gamaru* tree with non-edible 'apple'-like nuts was growing there [778] too. This tree is sacred; it is a *jirijiri* bullroarer tree,[1] and to-day only those who are very old may look upon it. Here the Djanggawul paused and heard again the cry of the *ngadili* (*dangadilji* or *rirambung*) black cockatoo. Here too is the sacred waterhole, *milngur*, which [778] the Djanggawul made by inserting the *mauwulan rangga* pole: a spring flows from it down to the beach. It is said that the four Beings entered this hole, and made their camp within.

Later, they walked farther along, and saw two *djanda* goanna resting on the peak of a sandhill. 'Ah,' said the Brother, 'I am very surprised to see this goanna. I had better put it Dreaming (*wongar*) for this country.' *Bangguli* is the goannas' 'inside' sacred name. The goanna crawled up the smooth surface of the sandhill, dislodging the sand. It attempted to climb on to the sacred *djuda* pole (that is, tree) the Djanggawul had placed there, but could not do [824] so, because the Djanggawul were still there. To-day the *djuda* ironwood (or 'black' bark) tree is still there, at Mauwulanggalngu, 778] where it grew from the sacred *rangga*.

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[1] The connexion with a bullroarer is not clear, for this object is not now used in the *dua nara* ceremonies, but only in the *kunapipi*. *Vide* R. Berndt, *Kunapipi*, Chapters III and IV. [534]

The Djanggawul Myth

113 After leaving the sandhills the Djanggawul continued walking along. Near the beach at Gumararanggu (named from the *gamaru* tree there), still on the Port Bradshaw peninsula, they heard the noise made by the black *malgu* flying fox, and saw more sandhills and goannas, as well as *gunjan* beach worms.

Coming to Wabilinga Island, which was later to become a large Macassan settlement,[1] they saw the Baijini folk who were working there. They were cooking trepang, where the tamarind trees stand to-day. The Djanggawul were much perturbed and said to the Baijini, 'Baijini, you had better move from here to your own place; for this place must belong to us, and we are going to establish a sacred site.' So some of the Baijini moved to the other side of the island, and some went to Dagu (vagina or vulva) on the mainland. But they left behind them on the island ashes from their fires, the criss-cross elongated bars on which their trepang was left to dry, some huts, and a *djiru* trepang-stirring 'spoon' or ladle. Djanggawul picked this up and looked at it. 'Ah,' he said, 'this is a good colour. I shall have it for myself.' The *djiru* was black, a colour that the Djanggawul now used for the first time, together with blackness from the charcoal in the ashes of the Baijini fires. In this way, the locality became partly *dua*, from the Djanggawul, and partly *jiritja*, from the Baijini.

Another *jiritja* moiety Ancestral Being, named Laintjung, was also present at this site. He exchanged gifts with the Djanggawul, and in return for some red parakeet feathered string gave them some black clan patterns, and opossum fur string. That is why, to-day, each moiety has something belonging to the other: the *jiritja* took from the *dua*, and vice versa. Laintjung was also given a red parakeet feathered *jiridbald* waist-band and some *judumiri* arm-bands. He possessed, too, a piece of cloth[2] which he had obtained from the Baijini, but the Djanggawul refused to take any of this. The Djanggawul had apparently come prepared for this meeting with people of the *jiritja* moiety. They had half expected trouble from them when they requested the Baijini to move, and carried in readiness *gundmara* ('inside' name) fighting dilly bags.

Leaving Wabilinga Island behind them, the Djanggawul moved to Gagubam, where they heard the *djawuldjawul* mangrove bird calling out in the early morning. After this they heard 'people and 773 children' crying; and here spirit footprints of children may be seen on the rocks. These are the spirits who are as yet unborn, and remain in the uterus of the elder Sister, Bildjiwuraroiju. After leaving Gagubam the Djanggawul passed Bauwuling (or Bauwijara) where they saw *bauwaldja* catfish swimming after small fish and *bunabi* trepang slugs. And above Bauwuling, in the fresh water well on dry land, surrounded by mangroves and salt water, was *biabia* refuse from the trepang.

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[1] It was on this island that pottery was found a few years ago: *vide* R. and C. Berndt, Discovery of Pottery in North-Eastern Arnhem Land, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 1950, Vol. LXXVII, No. 11, pp. 133-8.

[2] That is, according to the great Baijini Song Cycle, cloth woven by the Baijini themselves on the Australian mainland on a primitive hand loom. *Vide* R. and C. Berndt, *Arnhem Land—Its History and Its People*.

After spending some time in the Port Bradshaw country, establishing sacred sites, they decided to walk down the beach towards Caledon Bay; but there were so many totemic folk in those parts that they again got into their canoe and paddled down to Gambuga-(wi) at Caledon Bay, in territory of the Karlpu linguistic group. There they are said to have made a sacred place, and put special *djuda*. These were *rangga* emblems which, with others, they had carried from Bralgu in the *ngainmara* mat, and trees sprang up as they were pushed into the ground.

When they had done this they looked up, and saw a big dry weather cloud or mirage, called *wulma*. It was coming from Buguwolumiri, in the country of the Djapu linguistic group, towards the 'bottom' (or southern part) of Blue Mud Bay; so they travelled towards that place, and put more dreamings there. Their clitorises and penis were still dragging on the ground.

Then they saw another *wulma* towards the 'top' of Blue Mud Bay, at Bugalji, in Djarlwak linguistic group territory. They paddled around the coast to that place, and left dreamings there. Then, abandoning their canoe, they went on foot through the bush until they came to Balimauwi; this is also in Djarlwak country, on the northern side of Rose River. They made a big camp, building a 824 number of different 'shades' or huts, which to-day are paperbark trees; and there they also placed many dreamings.

Thus through the greater part of the country about Port Bradshaw, 773 below Jelangbara almost to Rose River, all along the coast 778 and even a little way inland, the Djanggawul left special drawings symbolically related to themselves and to totemic beings. They 794 left, too, sacred *rangga* emblems, such as the *djuda*, the *djanda* (goanna) and *mauwulan* (associated with water springs), as well as sacred baskets. At all those places, moreover, they established their cult, with the singing of songs and the ritual of the *dua* moiety *nara* ceremonies.

While at Balimauwi, they looked up into the north western sky 773 and saw a great *wulma* hanging over Ngaluwi ('inside' name Waguralgu) at Arnhem Bay, in the territory of the Ngeimil and

113 Dadawi linguistic groups. The Djanggawul eventually reached this place and made a camp, putting many dreamings there. They made a fish trap and caught many fish to eat. They also put the wild banana palm, and Djanggawul with his *mauwulan rangga* poked holes in the ground from which water flowed.

After a time they left Ngaluwi, walking along until they reached Gulugboi(wi), where they made a big 'shade'. They pushed their *djuda* into the ground, and trees sprang forth; and they put the *banggada* plants there.

At Daramur (or Darar'woi), inland from Arnhem Bay, the Djanggawul saw a *djanda* goanna in a fresh-water swamp that was covered with wild banana *dara* leaves; this was in Ngeimil territory.

Farther on at Mingu well, also in Ngeimil country, a *djanda* emerged from an open well which contained partially submerged banana foliage: new shoots had come up, completely covering the surface of the water.

Passing on to Djaddjananggu (also Ngeimil), they found a swamp where they saw *warugai* or *marabinj* fish; here too they saw lily roots and foliage, with flowers, and many ducks. Close by was the Maijulwi billabong where the *dadam* lily, with its round edible bulbs, was growing in great profusion. The Djanggawul Brother [118 himself declared part of Maijulwi sacred, so that to-day only two 562] tracks, one at each side, lead down to its banks; women may go down one of these only to get water, and must always return by the same road.

Continuing on, the Djanggawul reached Nganmaruwi, where they erected another large 'shade'. During all the time they had been on the Australian mainland, there is no mention of the Brother's having coitus with his Sisters; but while they were living here, he said to Bildjiwuraroiju, 'I want to copulate with you, Sister.'

But the elder Sister was shy. 'Why?' she asked him.

'I want to put a few people in this place,' the Brother replied.

So he lifted her clitoris, and inserted his long penis. He did the same with Miralaidj. So they continued living there, and he copulated as a husband does with his wives.

After some time, Bildjiwuraroiju became pregnant, and her Brother said to her, 'Sister, may I have a look at you?'

'What for?' she asked.

'Because I want to put some people in this place.'

'All right,' she replied. She opened her legs a little, resting her clitoris on her left leg. The Brother sat before his Sister and placed his index finger into her vagina, up to the first joint.[1] Then he pulled it away, and at the same time a baby boy came out. Bildjiwuraroiju was careful to open her legs only a little; if she had spread them out, children would have flowed from her, for she kept many people stored away in her uterus. These people (or children) in her uterus were like *rangga* emblems kept in the conical- shaped *ngainmara* mat, for the latter is a uterus symbol.

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[1] Tip of finger, *darir*; from tip to first joint, *dariribulungun*.

As the baby-boy came out, the Brother stood listening to hear the sound of his cry. As soon as he heard this, he took hold of the child and put him on to the grass near by. Then he returned to his Sister, and saw a baby girl coming out. After she had cried, he lifted her gently and placed her under the *ngainmara* mat, which served to shelter her from the sun. The crying of a male child is *rirakai'dugung*, a forceful 'heavy' sound; while that of a girl is *rirakai njumulgunin*, a 'small sound'.

Then another male child issued from the elder Sister, and was put into the grass by the Brother. She continued giving birth to children of both sexes; when she had finished she closed her legs, and the Djanggawul Brother said to her:

'Sister, these little boys we will put in the grass, so that later, when they grow up, they will have whiskers; those whiskers are from the grass. We will always do that when we remove male children. And these little girls we have put under the *ngainmara* mat, hiding them there. That is because they must be smooth and soft and have no body hair, and because girls are really sacred. They must be kept under the *ngainmara*, just as the *rangga* emblems are kept. We will always do that when we remove female children.'

The Djanggawul then left this place. The children they had produced grew up and married, and were the progenitors of the present Aborigines of those parts. From this time, too, the Two Sisters remained always pregnant, from having coitus with their Brother.

They walked along Arnhem Bay until they reached a place named Gangangu. Here they saw red parakeets, and put a number of dreamings in the swamp: that is, they hid in its waters some sacred *rangga* and clan patterns. Then they went on until they came to Madi or Mugarei (in Ngeimil territory). Here they decided to make their home, and they put a lot of dreamings. Up to this time the three of them had slept separately, the Brother calling one of his Sisters over to his side when he wanted coitus.[1] At Madi, however, they decided to lie together, the Brother himself sleeping

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[1] No further mention is made of Bralbral; after his arrival on the mainland he seems to disappear from the story.

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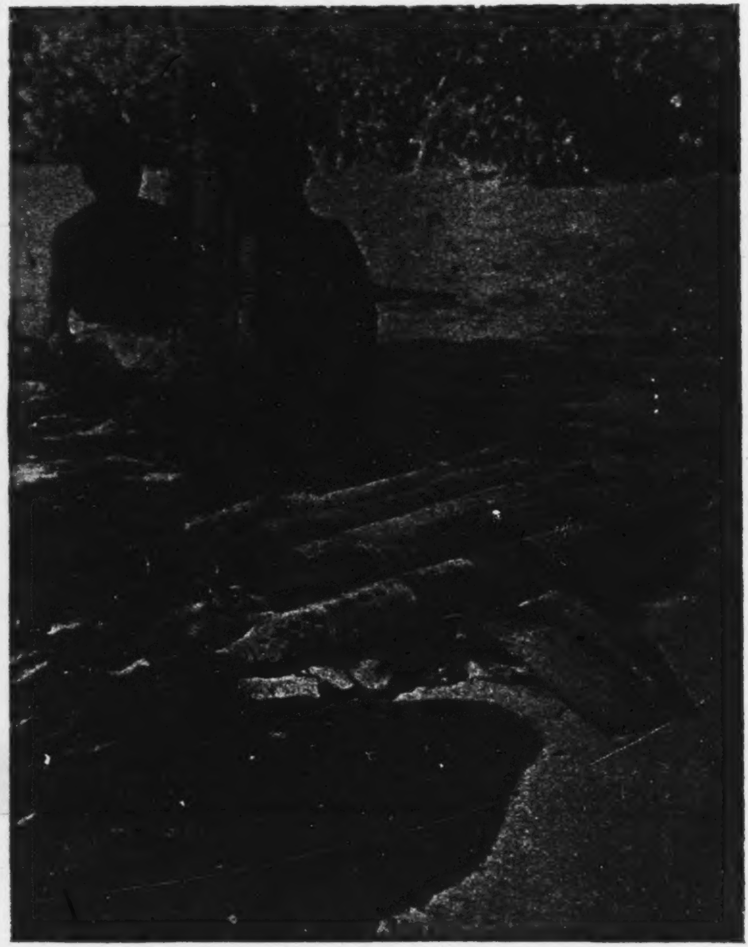

5. *Rangga* emblems displayed on the sacred ground.

[facing p, 32]

between the Two Sisters.[1] But the *djalngin* leech bit them repeatedly, as they waded in the waters of the billabong, and so they continued on to Wulmawi (Walmali or Wulma, meaning a cloud).[2] They lived there for a time, putting many dreamings, as well as a special dilly bag and *djuda* tree *rangga*. The Djanggawul Brother poked the ground with his *mauwulan rangga*, making one hole after another, and calling at each the sacred invocations, so that water came gushing forth.

'This well is for the Ngeimil,' he said, drawing his *mauwulan* from the ground, and letting the water flow.

'This well is for the Riradjingu, this one for the Djapu, this for the Dadawi, this for the Djambatpingu, this for the Djarwak, this for the Marangu, and this for the Marakulu.'[3] He left special dreamings too from Wulmawi to Mudumli, at Arnhem Bay in Ngeimil country. In this way, he put his *mauwulan rangga* into every well in that region.

When they reached Mudumli, the Brother and Sisters saw the *mudum*, a small fresh-water fish. The Brother wanted to sit down here,

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[1] In one version, it is said that more children are left at Madi, but not in the same way as described in the main myth. After they had lain together, the Sisters grew large in pregnancy: they went down to Madi pandanus swamp and put into the water their *ngainmara* mat (also said to be a dilly bag), from which came people.

Now these Sisters 'just dropped' (that is, gave birth to) all the people, and their Brother is here said to have been unaware of their actions 'for only women know'. Near the pandanus swamp is a large mud bank, which is the *ngainmara* they used; and since this was made from pandanus leaves, great numbers of these palms grow hereabouts.

This version too declares that it was Madi, and not Nganmaruwi (as in the above text), where the male and female children, after being removed from the *ngainmara* (uterus), were put for the first time in the grass and under the mat respectively. It is said too that the Sisters did not tell their Brother that they did this; 'they themselves only knew about it'. Thus when the Brother came to collect all the *rangga* and put them away in the *ngainmara* mat, he saw that there were many 'people' (also synonymous with the *rangga* emblems). He counted them, before putting them away, and as he did so, he said to himself, 'Ah, this is a man, this is a woman'. There are, therefore, male *rangga* (penis and foreskin *rangga*) and female *rangga* (*gungman*, a woman who has produced a child, and *wirlgul*, adolescent girl, *rangga*). Then the Brother put them back into the *ngainmara*, hiding the women from the men. Those he left behind were called Madjara, which means 'half the group', and those who were left in the mat (bag, or uterus) were Malei'arangu, while all of them together were Madjaramala'bunginbungin. In this way people were left from Blue Mud Bay to Milingimbi, and inland to the sacred billabong of Muruwul (of Wauwalak fame: *vide* R. Berndt, *Kunapipi*, Chapter III).

[2] Also in Ngeimil country, but affiliated with the Riradjingu linguistic group.

[3] *Vide* A. P. Elkin, R. and C. Berndt, *Art in Arnhem Land*, pp. 22–3, for clan and linguistic group terms and organization.

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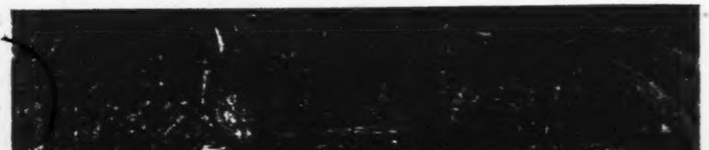
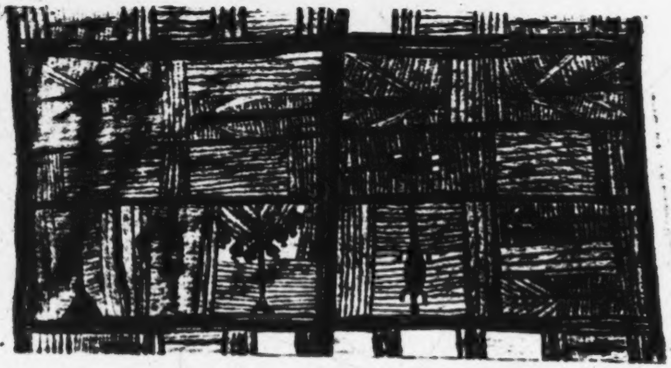


6. The Djanggawul Brother and younger Sister at Jelangbara.



7. Sacred *rangga* at Port Bradshaw.

[facing p. 33]

but his Sisters protested that they didn't want to put people in this place.

'May we live here, Sisters?' asked the Brother.

'No,' they replied, 'You may only sing here. We are not going to put our people in this place.'

So they walked along until they reached Dalwirgauwi (in Ngeimil territory). This place takes its name from a water worm or leech (*gauwigauri*), and when they saw it, they sang about it. As they were singing, they looked up and saw a water goanna (*djalga*, 'inside' name; *wonggawa*, 'outside' name) perched on a tree near the billabong. They began to sing about it, and as they did so they killed it, roasting it over the coals. When it was cooked, they cut off its tail and head, and hid the verterbrae under the ground after removing the fat and meat. The hidden verterbrae became a *rangga*.

Leaving this place, they continued on to Woiwiwi (Wuwul or Wulwi), so named because of the tears shed by the Djanggawul; the trio had been walking for a long time, and the sun and the stinging sand had made their eyes smart until the tears ran. Here, too, the Djanggawul Brother persuaded his elder Sister to open her legs so that some children could be left. In much the same way as before, she opened her legs, resting her clitoris on her left leg, while her Brother inserted his index finger into her vagina so that it went up to a point between the first and second joints (this point is called *nabunga*). When he pulled out his finger, children of both sexes came forth; the boys were placed in the grass, and the girls under the cover of the *ngainmara*. These children grew up to become the progenitors of the Aborigines of this region, which was still Ngeimil territory. The Djanggawul also put four *djuda* there, and many dreamings. All these things they left for the children whom they had put there, so that when they grew up they and their descendants could look after them.

At all the places through which they passed, the Djanggawul Brother had had coitus with his Sisters, and the three had dragged their genitalia along the ground, while the Two Sisters continued to be pregnant.

They continued to Ngainmaruwi (or Ngainmaralji), so named because the Sisters had their *ngainmara* mats full of children—that is to say, their uteri were full. Here they saw wild duck tracks, wild peanuts and their foliage, and some *djanda* goanna; but the goanna were frightened on seeing the Djanggawul, and ran away. They made camp here. On one side they placed the *ngainmara* and on the other grass, and in between sat the Brother with his Two Sisters. He lifted Bildjiwuraroiju's clitoris, and again inserted his index finger up to the second joint (*bulungun*); as he pulled it out, both girls and boys came forth one after the other. The girls he put on one side, under the *ngainmara* beside the Sister, and the boys on the other, among the grass, next to himself.

As Djanggawul was occupied in helping to remove the children, he heard a big noise in the distance. This was the sound of new spring water running. He spoke to the two women: 'Sisters, if you will look after our children, I shall go myself to look around and see the water, which should be coming up.'

Leaving his Sisters, he walked along the swamp called Ngudbarei (the 'inside' name of Ngainmaruwi), and he put all the dreamings into its waters for the Ngeimil people. When he had done this he returned to his Sisters, and spoke to the female children. 'I have put our things into that swamp,' he said. 'You must not go there, but when you grow up you can drink water down there away from that sacred place.'

They had all been living there for some time, when one day they saw a *wulma* spreading across the sky. Then the Djanggawul left their children and continued on their journey, walking along till they came to mangroves which belonged to the *jiritja* moiety. As they skirted these, they heard the noise made by a big river running towards the sea from the highlands.

'Look, Brother,' said Bildjiwuraroiju, 'We had better not go through that water (of the *jiritja* moiety); it is running too strongly.' She was referring to the Ngurumuruwoi river, in Dalwongu linguistic group territory.

They listened there, beside the mangroves, and heard the Baijini people talking. These Baijini were making a lot of noise, singing and playing, among their houses.

'Well, Sisters,' said the Djanggawul Brother, 'the Baijini are there. We had better go farther up the river.'

So they continued to Daranga-dabareigarei, which means 'running water from rain', and is in Djambatpingu territory. They went on until they reached Grogula, where the yellow snake had made its camp.

'Look, Sisters,' said the Brother, seeing the yellow snake at this place. 'Look, he blocks our track.' So they went round and past the snake. They had not gone far before they reached Brubari, the place of the Thunder Man, and saw him there; but the Djanggawul Brother said, 'We will leave that *dua* Thunder Man, and go on.' So they went past him too, and continued on their way.

They went on walking until they came to Milguli (named from the *milgu*, mangrove worm). Here two *jiritja wongar* people, belonging to the Kupapingu linguistic group, were collecting these worms.

The Djanggawul Myth

'Some one blocks our road again, Sisters,' said the Brother, 'these *jiritja wongar* man and woman.' They listened and heard them chopping wood, removing the worms. So they by-passed the two *wongar*, and continued on until they reached Damijagaiju, in Djambatpingu country, so named because the black *ngadili* cockatoo swooped down and alighted at this place.

When the Djanggawul heard the cry of this bird they were happy, and began to sing. And Bildjiwuraroiju said to her Brother, 'Perhaps we will live at this place. This is our place, and the cockatoo's cry makes us all happy, Brother.' Here too, there were edible *winigamu* roots (called 'jungle tucker'); so they collected these, and sang about them. In the branches of a tree they hung a special dilly bag; and they constructed two large shades, one for the Two Sisters and one for the Brother. The latter, using his *mauwulan rangga* pole, made many wells thereabouts, and he also put many *djuda* trees.

When this was done, the Djanggawul Brother said to his Sisters, 'That is enough for this country. We have to go on now.'

So they went on their way again, but camped only a short distance from Damijagaiju.

It was here that a *wongar* 'enemy' man, or sorcerer, surprised Miralaidj when she was walking by herself. He had come really to kill the Djanggawul Brother, but failing to see him concentrated on the younger Sister. This sorcerer made her unconscious through magic, then inserted *rigal* bones vertically into her body behind the collar-bone, cut her across the cheeks at each side of the mouth and pulled down her jaw. Finally, after copulating with her, he made cuts from the vulva upwards at each side, outlining the mons veneris and pulling the flesh up to bare the pelvic bone. He replaced the flesh, and put her jaw into position, and left her lying on the ground. Some time later she regained consciousness and returned to her Sister and Brother, but the next morning she died. That same day she was buried at Damijagaiju. They erected a post over her grave, and hung upon it two special dilly bags. The elder Sister and Brother were anxious to leave this country; and since they had no intention of returning, they did not place the dead Miralaidj on a platform for decomposition and eventual bone-collection.

Miralaidj, however, miraculously reappears in the story, and accompanies her Brother and Sister on their journey.

They had not gone far when they saw another *wulma* spreading across the sky. They walked towards it, and came to Ngulmamiriju (so named because of the *wulma* or *ngulma*). Here they heard a great many *jiritja wongar*—the fire from Caledon Bay, the 'sugarbag' bee, and so on. The Djanggawul, however, did not stop; they went on, hearing the *jiritja* bee which came from the Kupapingu and Lialaumiri territories. Passing through densely covered bush country, they eventually reached another Ngainmaruwi, in Djambatpingu country, on the western side of Arnhem Bay.[1]

Here the Djanggawul Brother inserted his *mauwulan* into the ground, and withdrawing it made a well. He made a camp, and put many dreamings; and he hung a sacred dilly bag in the branches of a tree. Here, too, he persuaded Bildjiwuraroiju and Miralaidj to give birth to a number of children, in much the same way as before. This time he put his index finger into their vaginae up to the knuckle (*dajalwajun-bulungun* or *deijalwadunju-bulungun*).

Then they left this place, and went on to Balgaimi, where the Djanggawul urinated. They were still dragging their clitorises and penis, and at last they reached Wobilangoii (which is named after Wobilinga Island in the mouth of Port Bradshaw harbour, on the eastern side of Arnhem Land). Here they sang, and put many children. This time the Djanggawul Brother put two fingers into his Sisters' vaginae, the index and middle fingers. He did this each time children were taken out, gradually putting in additional fingers until at last he was inserting his whole hand, and finally his whole arm.

At Wobilangoii the Djambatpingu shark blocked their road to the west, so that they had to make a bark canoe. They hid their sacred emblems within the *ngainmara* mat, and paddled out to sea.

At last they came into Milmindjalboi and drew up their canoe on to the beach. The Djanggawul disembarked, and put a *mauwulan* point into the ground to form a well; but as the water gushed forth the *jiritja* Ancestral Being Banaitja, son of the great Laintjung, came out too. The name of the place is derived from this incident. Since Banaitja was there, the Djanggawul just put some of their dreamings and continued on to Buangura, where they made camp.

Here they heard the *ngadili* black cockatoo crying out. 'Ah,' said the Djanggawul, 'this is the special bird for us. It looks as if we should camp here.' And they began to sing.

Then they heard the *Wurulbaralb* mangrove bird, so they sang about that too. When they had finished, the Djanggawul Brother took his *mauwulan* and poked it into the ground, but it sank right in ('diving right down'). He tried another place, with the same result. Then he walked to the summit of a hill and put it into the ground there; just below the surface it struck black rocks, but a little water gushed forth and ran down the hillside at Bunangura. Then he tried elsewhere, but the *mauwulan* did not go right down.

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[1] This place has the same name as the one mentioned before, and means the place of the *ngainmara* mat.

He returned to the camp, and put his index, second and third fingers into his Sisters' vaginae, removing a number of children, whom they left at this place.

Continuing their journey they reached Jagajawula, where the Djanggawul Brother inserted his *mauwulan* in a likely spot; but when he withdrew it, no water came out. Farther up he tried again, and again, with the same result. No water appeared.

'I don't know what we are going to do, Brother,' said the Sisters. 'We are growing thirsty, and no water comes out when we withdraw the *mauwulan*.'

They walked along until they came to Dunawi (so named because they put the *mauwulan* in there). Here they saw plenty of *waluwon* mangrove shells, and sang about them. Still they walked on, until they reached Galgidjboi (or Duwalgidjboi), where they saw geese, from which the place takes its name. Here, too, they saw the Thunder Man; but they sang only about the geese. The Djanggawul put two *djuda*, crossed together and standing up.

While they were walking along, the Brother and Sisters tripped over a *wulimu* 'grape' grass creeper, which became tangled about their feet. As they fell, the Brother accidentally pushed his *mauwulan* pole into the mud; and straight away a big sea came up and flooded this part of the country.

The Djanggawul talked together about this, 'What shall we do? We'd better go back the way we came, for we don't want to go through all this mud.' They turned back, and went along the river bank until they reached Daraweimirangu, so named because the Brother and Sisters took a fire-stick and tried to twirl it to make fire; but they did not succeed.

They left this place, then, and walked along the cliffs until they reached a river. Here the tide was very strong and the river was deep, because of the water which had risen when the Brother accidentally pushed in his *mauwulan*. They tried to cross, but when they could not do so they continued along the bank until they came to Djulngeijari. There they made posts and rails to form a large fish catchment; they saw many varieties of fish and crab, including the *bigun* grass crab, and they sang about these.

Near this place they were able to cross the river. They had not gone far, when they looked up and saw a spreading *wulma* rising from the mainland opposite Elcho Island, in Djambadpingu country. Going towards this, they eventually reached Maidjalngari, where they sang about some wild ducks they saw flying. Bildjiwuraroiju looked up and saw the *ngadili* bird, and sang about that too.

It was here that they made a big camp; and the Djanggawul

The Djanggawul Myth

113 Brother examined the clitorises of his Sisters, wanting to shorten them. But they would not allow him to do so. 'No,' they said, 'we will go farther on, for we must first fill up this country with people. It is a bit cold here, too; it is better that we should have warm country where we cut our long clitorises.' So they left Maidjalngari behind them and came to Gulibangaru, also in Djambatpingu country. There they saw and sang about the *gabila* mangrove 'nail' fish, from which the place takes its name.

They waded in the water among the mangrove roots, trying to catch these fish by blocking channels with their hands. The 'nails' of the fish pierced the Sisters' hands and opened them (*gonglaidjung*)[1] so that the blood ran. So they sang about the fish, and the running blood.

They left this place, and came to Mialbungara ('inside' name, [118] Marabai), where they put a number of sacred dilly bags: Marabai is one of the big sacred places of this region.[2]

'Look, Brother,' said the Sisters, 'I think we can leave these dilly bags in this shade; and we can put all the dreamings in here, because it is a big country.'

'Yes,' the Brother replied. 'I am pleased to hear that.'

So they hung up the dilly bags, first one belonging to the Riradjingu, then the Dadawi one in the middle, and the Djambatpingu one at the end. Then they camped in their sacred shade, and the Djanggawul Brother put his hand, up to a point (termed *malnguraga*) between the knuckles and the wrist, into the elder Sister's vagina. He withdrew a great number of children. A lot of people came out, men, women and children, and they were all crying; there were big groups of them. Then the Djanggawul made three shades, one for each of the three linguistic groups mentioned above, and an additional one for the Djarlwak. While they were living there, the elder Sister said one day to the younger, 'We had better put our dilly bags in this shade, and leave them here for a while.'

'What are we going to do?' asked the other. 'If we put them here, what then are we going to do?'

'Well,' replied the elder Sister, 'we can look around for mangrove shells.'

So they both left their camp to collect *mingaul* and *waluwon* shells.

While they were away, the Djanggawul Brother and his companions, men who had come out of the Sisters, but called the

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[1] Some versions say that the fish 'cut' the Sisters' hands, dividing the fingers and thumbs, whereas before the fingers of each hand had been joined together.

[2] The Two Sisters took from Madi to Marabai one woman, whose name is unknown Between Madi and Marabai are many wells, made by the *mauwulan* of the Djanggawul.

The Djanggawul Myth

Djanggawul 'brother' and 'sisters', were hiding in their big shade.[1] 773 In the myth, these are called the Djanggawul Brothers. The women who came out of the Sisters are assumed to have gone out foraging for food in another direction.

Meantime, the Two Sisters had collected a lot of shells. When they waded back to dry land, they heard the whistle of the *djunmal* bird (a black, green and yellow mangrove bird), warning them that something was wrong. At once they knew that something had happened to their dilly bags, which contained the sacred *rangga*.[2]

'You know that *djunmal*, Sister,' the younger Sister asked. 'What is it crying for?'

'That bird cries to let us know,' answered the other. 'Perhaps something has happened to our sacred dilly bags. Maybe the fire has burnt them. We had better go back and look.'

They left what they were doing, and ran back towards their shade. The dilly bags were gone, and on the ground about the shade were the tracks of the men who had stolen them.

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[1] That is, the Djanggawul Brother had a shade or hut, similar to that used on the *dua nara* ground, although he himself '"made" no dreaming'. All 'the beginning' belonged to the women, the Two Sisters, and all the dreamings really belonged to them. The Djanggawul Brother and his 'brothers' sat down at their shade and made fire ready to cook their food, for at that time it was the men's duty to collect all the food, and to prepare it for the women as well as for themselves.

In another version, we are told that the men and the Brother just sat there; for the Two Sisters and their 'sisters' (that is, women from their uteri) were holding a *mareiin* sacred *nara* ceremony, which was their 'own business', to which the men could not come. The women, however, were fairly close to the men, for it is said that the men 'came over by themselves on top of the women's tracks', and entered their separate shade.

In their own sacred shade the women made fire, *rindjarei*, the sacred fire dreaming, [831 for fire comes from the redness of the women's vaginae. The twirling firestick in its groove is symbolic of coitus, because a man is warmed by lying between a woman's 372] legs just as he is by a fire, since a woman's vulva is always 'hot'.

After their ceremony the women hung their fighting dilly bags, decorated with tasselled pendants of red parakeet feathers, on the limb of a tree, and went out to collect shell-fish. (Here the main text takes up the story.)

[2] The men sat listening in their shade; and when they heard no noise, no singing or dancing, they said to one another, 'All right. It is no good that we are men. It is no good that women should have that sacred bag and all the dreamings, and we should have nothing. We'll take over from those women.' They all agreed, 'Yes.'

So they came up to the women's sacred shade and went inside; and there they found all the dreamings, all the *rangga* and clan patterns. They began to dance and sing the sacred songs which they had learnt by listening to the women, and which are still sung to-day in the *dua nara*. As they sang, they looked in the direction the women had taken, but saw no sign of them. Then they took down the sacred dilly bag of the women and danced with it.

The Djanggawul Myth

113 'Sister, look!' called the younger Sister. 'What are we going to do now? Where are our dilly bags?'

'We had better go down and ask the men,' said the other, 'it's nothing to do with them.'

They hurried off, down towards the men. As they came running, the Djanggawul Brother and his companions looked up from their shade and saw them.

'What shall we do?' thought the Brother. He picked up his *jugulung* singing sticks, and began to beat rhythmically upon them, while they all sang.

As soon as the Sisters heard the beat of the singing sticks, and the sound of the men's singing, they fell down and began to crawl along the ground.[1] They were too 'frightened' to go near that dreaming place, the shade of the Djanggawul Brother. They were fearful not of the men, but of the power of the sacred songs. The men had taken from them not only these songs, and the emblems, but also the power to perform sacred ritual, a power which had formerly belonged only to the Sisters. They had carried the emblems and dreamings in their *ngainmara*, which were really their uteri; and the men had had nothing.

The Two Sisters got up from the ground, and the younger one said to the elder, 'What are we going to do? All our dilly bags are gone, all the emblems, all our power for sacred ritual!'

But the other replied, 'I think we can leave that. Men can do it now, they can look after it. We can spend our time collecting bush foods for them, for it is not right that they should get that food as they have been doing. We know everything. We have really lost nothing, for we remember it all, and we can let them have that small part. For aren't we still sacred, even if we have lost the bags? Haven't we still our uteri?' And the younger Sister agreed with her.

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[1] In another version it is said that as the Two Sisters saw the men in the shade, and heard the clapping of their sticks with the rhythmic rise and fall of the song, they stopped running and said, 'They take place for us (that is, take our part). Shall we leave them alone?' asked the younger Sister. 'We'll have to take back that bag, because it does not belong to them.'

'If we do that, we'll have to go inside the shade,' replied the elder Sister. 'All right, we'll do that,' said the other.

They began to run again, towards the shade. But the men made a big noise, with their dancing and singing. This halted the Sisters. They bowed their heads and said to the men, 'Forgive us. Our "fathers" can now look after all those dreamings, perhaps better than we can.' (The women substitute the word 'Fathers' for 'Brothers'; it is used here as a term of respect.)

Then the Sisters turned back from their shade and hid in the bush, 'for it is not right that women should go towards the men's sacred place'. This is the beginning of the men's sacred ritual. 'Women should really be the Ceremonial Leaders, for everything belonged to them; but the men stole it all. But really we still know that they are the real leaders.'

It was the men, however, who introduced the drawing of sacred designs.

In this way, the Two Sisters left all their dreamings at that place. They put a lot of people there too, while the Djanggawul Brother and his companions sang songs and performed ritual of the *dua nara* ceremonies. The Sisters also made a very sacred well, so sacred that none but those with white hair may go near it. This is the sacred well of Marabai.

After a time, they and their Brother continued on their way[1] and eventually reached Baldangaru, named from the white liquid which poured from the vaginae of the Sisters. This liquid came from them because they had been putting out too many children in that country. They lived for a while at Baldangaru. One day they looked back towards the east, the direction from which they had come, and saw the sun's disc rising and its rays lighting up the country; and so they sang about it.

While they were there, the Djanggawul Brother was sitting with his Sisters, whose clitorises were resting on their legs. He looked at Miralaidj and saw her vulva, for her legs were slightly apart. He began to put his penis out, and gradually it became erect (*laldjunba*) like a sacred emblem pole; he bent forward and took hold of his Sister making ready to insert his penis. But the elder Sister spoke to him. 'No,' she said, 'you are not to do it yet, she is far too young.' (This contradicts previous statements that the Brother had been engaging in coitus with both his Sisters.) 'This is cold country, and you can't put it up properly (that is, erect penis); the hot country is much better. If you wait till we are farther up in the hot country, the skin will be different.' So instead of copulating, they put many dreamings there.

They walked further on to Djauwadad, so named because the Djanggawul slipped a little as they walked along. They were still dragging their elongated genitalia. At last they came through plain country to Dambala(nguru), the 'inside' name, or Greidjaru, the 'outside' name, meaning 'the cutting place of the clitorises and penis.'

Here they made a large shade, and the Djanggawul Brother spoke to the others. 'Sisters, I want to look at you both now, and see what you're like. This is a good place, and I'm going to cut you both.' First he lifted the clitoris of the elder Sister and cut it, leaving only a small clitoris which reached to her thigh. Then he turned to the younger Sister, and cut off her clitoris in the same way.

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[1] In one version it is said that they went to Muruwul, the sacred waterhole where the Julunggul Snake lives, and where the Wauwalak Sisters were swallowed; but this is not confirmed. *Vide Kunapipi*, Chapter III.

113 'Ah,' said the Brother, 'Now you look more like proper women and it is easier for me to see the slit of your vulvae. Let me try them out.' First he copulated with the younger Sister. 'That feels nice,' he said. Then, turning to the elder Sister, he copulated with her too. 'That's very enjoyable,' he told her. 'I can feel the short end of the clitoris touching my penis, as I couldn't before.' The long clitorises the Brother had cut off were like *rangga* poles. He placed these in the sacred shade so that they could always be there for the people to use in generations to come. It is also said that from the cut clitorises, the Djanggawul made a special feathered string used to-day to decorate sacred *rangga*. When this was finished they hung it from the limb of a tree near the shade.

'Sisters,' said the Brother, 'I have made your clitorises shorter. We shall leave a great number of people here, for now that you have short clitorises we can make more people come out from you.'

(It is said in the myth that this is the first time Miralaidj brings people from her uterus; but previous references contradict this.)

The younger Sister opened her legs and a few people came out of her. There were not many, because she was said to be still small.

The elder Sister helped her, by letting out a few from her own uterus. The Djanggawul Brother himself had not yet cut his own elongated penis; he carried it now by swinging it over his shoulder, and wrapping it around his neck.

Leaving Dambala(nguru) the Djanggawul walked along until they heard the sound of running water. Coming nearer, they traced the sound to the waters of Waruwi, as they ran down towards the sea. Waruwi river belongs to the Kupapingu, Waramiri and Ritarngu linguistic groups of the *jiritja* moiety.

'Look,' said the Brother and Sisters, 'the *jiritja* waters block us. We shall walk fast and pass them.'

When they had gone past Waruwi, they heard the sound of the *jiritja* honey bee.

'Ah,' said the Sisters, 'another *jiritja* blocks us! What are we going to do now?' Then the Djanggawul Brother replied, 'I think we will just go past, and not bother about that.'

The continued walking till they heard a wild *boda* duck, who was dancing and singing there. The three Djanggawul began to sing too, and called the name of that place Bodangura (from the duck); this is in Djambatpingu territory.

At last they reached Manbui, which was named after the younger Sister. The Djanggawul stood considering his two Sisters, looking at their clitorises, which now extended to their thighs. 'I must cut them more,' he said. So he cut their clitorises, until each Sister had only a small piece left in her vulva, no longer than women have to-day. From the ends that were cut off they made feathered string, and hung it in a sacred shade. 113

The Djanggawul Brother opened Miralaidj's legs a little, and kneeling before her inserted his penis into her up to its first notch or 'ring' (see Fig. 1). Then he ejaculated, and as he withdrew his penis, people too emerged from the uterus. This was just like the Brother's poking his *mauwulan* into the ground, so that water gushed forth. However, not enough people came from her, so Bildjiwuraroiju helped her. Miralaidj was not yet big enough in the belly, and had insufficient children inside her to fulfil the needs of this country. Nevertheless, most of the people came from her, and only a small proportion from the elder Sister.

At last the Djanggawul reached Gwroidjura (meaning 'to hold and copulate with her'); the Brother grabbed his elder Sister and opened her legs, holding her as he inserted his penis so that half of it went into her vagina. Then he ejaculated, and as he withdrew it people came flowing out.

They continued on until they reached Walinjina, where the Djanggawul Brother poked his *mauwulan* into the ground making several wells. To-day, there are three ordinary waterholes, and four tabu-ed ones. [823]

The three Djanggawul walked towards them and sat down, beginning to dig for the lily worm (*wida* or *gwoiida*), and singing about it.

Then they went on until they reached Maiilwi, where they heard the big *dua* flying fox. The Brother turned to his Sisters, 'You two Sisters, you can wait for me,' he said. 'I am going down to see what's there.' He walked away from them, to a place where he saw all these flying foxes hanging in a special tree. Then he returned to the Sisters. 'I saw a lot of flying foxes there, Sisters,' he said. 'What shall we do, leave them?'

'Let us just sing about them,' replied the Sisters.

But the Brother asked, 'Do you think we can get them all, kill them?'

'No,' insisted the elder Sister, 'we don't want to get them.' She turned to Miralaidj. 'What do you think, young Sister?'

'No,' agreed Miralaidj. 'We will leave them, because they are our own special flying fox.'

'All right,' answered their Brother, 'we shall leave this place.'

They went on, and as they approached Dambojowoi they heard the sound of water (from which the place takes its name). When they reached there they saw Buralindjingu, a very old dreaming man of the Maidjara linguistic group. He was sitting down meditating, but looked up and turned round when he heard the footsteps of the Djanggawul. 'Well, you three,' he said, 'you two women

713 and one man, you'll have to drink at that outside waterhole, and not at this special water where I am; for it is sacred.' Saying this, Buralindjingu took up his *jugulung* singing-sticks, and began to sing. The song and the rhythm were quite different from those used by the Djanggawul: but Buralindjingu was not pleased with it. Turning again to the Brother, he said, 'I'm not much good at singing, *gudara* (son's son). You had better take the singing-sticks.'

So the Djanggawul Brother took the singing-sticks and he and his Sisters began to sing about their journey by canoe from Bralgu, their landing at Jelangbara, and their subsequent adventures right up to their meeting with Buralindjingu. They went on singing their 'travelling story' all night, until the dawn came; and Buralindjingu listened with pleasure to their tale.

The Djanggawul Brother sang also for those two *dalibingu* or *galibingu* (young novices for circumcision, but in this case the Two Sisters). They painted the Two Sisters with sacred clan designs, and smeared red ochre over their bodies; they were *galibingu*, like novices who have their foreskins cut, for they had had their clitorises shortened. So the singing continued until the sun was in the middle of the sky. Then Buralindjingu gave cycad palm nut 'bread' to the Djanggawul, and they ate it sacramentally before continuing their journey.

At last they came to Galiwinggo Island (Elcho Island), where the Sisters produced more people. Camping at Ba'rarabu, the Brother put a number of dreamings, which belong to different *dua* groups.

At Nguruninana (or Wuruninana), near where the Elcho Island mission garden is to-day, they tried to make their home. But *jiritja* spring waters came bubbling up and forced them to leave this place, although the Djanggawul had left *dua* drawings and dreamings there.[1] The red ochre dreaming was the most important: the Djanggawul had brought this from Bralgu, and were forced to leave some at that spring. They then went farther along the Island

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[1] It is said that the spring waters, which were on *dua* territory, moved to the *jiritja* side and gave the Djanggawul no alternative but to leave.

This *jiritja* water had travelled from the southern shores of Blue Mud Bay to Duwalaba at Arnhem Bay, and then went underground, until at Nguruninana it came gushing out into the Djanggawul's camp. When it reached the Djanggawul, the *jiritja* water said, 'Give me more room! The *jiritja* dreaming told me to come up to you,' (that is, Laintjung had told it to come).

But the Djanggawul replied, 'We'll just put our dreaming in here for the *dua* side, and then we'll go.'

This *jiritja* water dreaming also went through from Grindall Bay north of Blue Mud Bay and northwards through the Bush; it just 'looked' at the second big river (unnamed) in western Arnhem Bay, and then continued to Elcho where the Djanggawul met it. From there it went down a creek to Howard Island and on to Milingimbi, where it came out at Macassar Well.

and left deposits of red ochre[1] at Warnggawoi and Gulmanbi spring. 773

Before the Djanggawul left Nguruninana, two novices were
circumcised, a *mora* and a *gurlmu*. These two boys[2] were sitting in 773
a big shade undergoing the circumcisional rites. When cut in the 304
camp they were called *gamajadi*, and then, on being taken out to
their seclusion shade, they were called *galibingu*. This was the first
time circumcision had been carried out in that region. Afterwards
it became a general practice, because the Djanggawul had 'made
it a big dreaming.'[3] But the Djanggawul Brother himself was never
'cut' or circumcised in this way: he only shortened his penis. He
is said to have circumcised the young boys 'because he didn't want
the youths' penes to grow long like his'. He made this law for the
new generation only, 'a new law for new people.' And he spoke
to them, saying, 'It doesn't matter for myself, but it must be a new
law for all my new people, all those I have put in this country.'[4]

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[1] This red ochre is called *murunggun*, from which the local linguistic group takes its name. The Djanggawul are said to have spoken here: 'We leave this red ochre, so that all the people may get it from us.' Red ochre is symbolic of the afterbirth blood shed by the Two Sisters, or is a 'condensation' of the sun's redness, as symbolized in the red chest feathers of the *lindaridj* parakeets. Today red ochre from Elcho Island is traded far inland, and all along the coast. [823 438]

[2] Also termed *muraloi* or *mulaloi*. The old term used to describe this stage was *galibingu* or *galinguru*: the novices are called by this term, or *galamunja* (referring to their penes), while undergoing the rites, and cannot use their real names. The real names of these two were, however, Nganangu and Bralbral, both of the *dua* moiety. The latter is said not to be the same as the Bralbral who accompanied the Djanggawul from Bralgu. These two novices went back and forth from the general camp to their sacred shade. (Among the north-eastern Arnhem Landers there is not the strict seclusion of circumcision novices found in most other parts of Australia.)

[3] In another version it is said that a son of the Djanggawul, a *marlgu* flying fox, was circumcised at Blue Mud Bay; his foreskin was kept and waxed into a feathered string pendant attached to a sacred dilly bag, as is the practice to-day. The reason given for the circumcision is that the Djanggawul Brother discovered that his children (those removed from the Two Sisters) were sleeping together, and indulging in incestuous relations with one another (as the Djanggawul themselves were in the habit of doing). At first he did not realize what they were doing, but one day he found them copulating together. Then he 'changed his mind' and cut (circumcised) the penes of the young boys (his sons), 'because they had slept with their sisters: that was their punishment'.

[4] Informants remark, 'He had been going on in the old way until that time, just like those people at Goulburn Islands, and the Gunwinggu, and others of western Arnhem Land. All those people haven't adopted the new law. If the Djanggawul Brother put it at those places, the people there have missed the law—but we, the north-eastern and north-central people, did not miss his law.'

Another version states that the Djanggawul started circumcision 'because he was pushed out by new people' (in the dreaming concept of *jiritia*, spring water).

The Djanggawul Myth

113 Before they left Nguruninana, the Djanggawul Brother awakened one early morning to see the sun rising.[1] He called to his Sisters; they all sat up, feeling its warmth. The sun's heat caressed his shoulders, and turning around the Brother saw it rising from Djalwalauwa,[2] or as it is also called, Djanggawul, on the Wessel Islands. As he looked, he sang. The Djanggawul then went over to the Wessels, and at Jalarula are the Brother's knee marks.[3]

When the *jiritja* spring water caused the Djanggawul to move, they crossed the strait to the top of Howard Island, and looked around for a place in which to build their camp.

Then they went on to Dariwi, where the *jalbin* wild honey was; but they did not stop here, for the Djanggawul said, 'Something blocks our way.' They walked along to Galguwiri, where they made camp, erecting a large shade; and the Brother, using his *mauwulan*, made a number of special wells. They also went to the top of Galguwiri, where the Brother made another well, and put his hand, up to the wrist, into the vagina of the young Sister. When he withdrew it he listened, and heard the children coming out. The little boys came first, and these he threw into the grass. Then he listened again, and heard a little girl crying; he pulled her out, and placed her under the *ngainmara*. Other girls, too, came out from the young Sister.

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[1] It is said in this version that this was the first time the sun rose. However, there are many references to the sun before this, and the reader must bear in mind the connexion between the sun and the Djanggawul.

[2] The place of the Djanggawul is the sun's place. As the Djanggawul looked to the east, in the direction of the rising sun, they thought of their home at Bralgu.

At Djalwalauwa the sun left its mark on the ground; this place is also said to be the 'home' of the red *lindaridj* parakeet, which belonged to the two 'daughters of the Sun'.

Walu, the Sun, had two daughters named Barinangu (counterparts of the Djanggawul Sisters). Originally they accompanied their Mother across the sky so that there were three suns; but their Mother said to them, 'You will have to go back to the Spirit Country of Bralgu, because it's no good for us all to go this way; it would be too hot for the people.' So they went back to Bralgu, and later came with the Djanggawul Brother to the Australian mainland.

But another inconsistency appears. The Mother speaks as if there were people already on the mainland, before the visit of her two daughters. One version tells that while the Djanggawul Brother and his Two Sisters were on Elcho Island there were three suns in the sky (that is, the Mother Sun and her two daughters), and that is why the Djanggawul got very hot; and it was then that the Mother Sun sent her two daughters to Bralgu, so that only one sun remained.

According to Warner (*op. cit.*, p. 537) the Sun woman is the wife of the Moon.

A 'play' or secular story (*wagal dau*) of north-central and north-eastern Arnhem Land declares that the Sun woman, who has one daughter, carries with her across the sky the sacred *mauwulan* and *ganinjari* sticks, and feathered string from the *lindaridj* parakeet (who calls her 'mother').

[3] There is little evidence relating to the Djanggawuls' visit to the Wessel Islands. Several versions insist that they did not go there, and that the places there are associated with them 'only through the song side'. The various groups on the Wessels always came to the mainland to celebrate the *dua nara* Djanggawul rituals.

When the Djanggawul Brother placed his hand into his Sisters, he used his right hand and arm (*dunabangu*) for Miralaidj, and his left hand and arm (*wilgurdei* or *djalbudei*) for Bildjiwuraroiju.

The three walked on until they came to Barangal (where the yellow snake was), and there they heard the *dalba* snake. 'Something blocks us here,' the Two Sisters said to their Brother. 'We will go past.'

They went on to Ngaladjalg (or Ngaladjeigan-djeiginli) which is on an open bay east of Milingimbi, in country of the 'light' Djambatpingu language group. Finally they reached Djiriliwuramaiju (or Djiriliwiriju), known by the 'inside' names of Maluwa or Magulmaguli. There they made a big shade, and sat down to dig for *ragai* roots.

While the Two Sisters were sitting in the waters of the billabong collecting these roots, their legs were apart and the water entered their vaginae. With the water came leeches. As soon as this happened the Sisters got up, and felt the leeches and the water inside their uteri. While they stood with their legs apart, out rushed the water, the leeches, and some children. The water and leeches had made them too heavy, and that is why the people came out too. So a great number of people were put here; and at the same time, the Djanggawul sang.

Coming on to Jalwuljalwul they made camp, the Two Sisters constructing their shade at one place and the Brother making his a little distance away. Later on he came down to where his Sisters were, and saw a child issuing from Miralaidj. He cut its umbilical cord, saying, 'This is my boy; he must go into the grass.' And he tossed it among the coarse undergrowth. Every day he visited the Sisters, and watched them bringing forth children. Each time a boy came out he put it into the grass; but the girls he deposited carefully in a clean soft place, hiding them under the *ngainmara*.

At every place they went to, the Djanggawul Sisters brought out children who grew to adulthood; and in this way the Djanggawul Brother was able to name all the various linguistic groups and clans.[1]

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[1] There are some inconsistencies in respect of this. On the one hand, according to the mythological text, all the clans and linguistic groups had a common origin, all having the Djanggawul for their parents. On the other hand, it is said that these clans and linguistic groups were of the *dua* moiety, while other Ancestral Beings, such as Laintjung and Banaitja, originated the *jiritja* moiety linguistic groups and clans.

Only the *dua* clans and groups, however, are mentioned; and in order to propagate,

The Djanggawul Myth

113 Leaving Jalwuljalwul[1] the Djanggawul continued on their way to Balmargi, in the country of the Wulagi people, on the mainland opposite Milingimbi. Here they put many dreamings and a number of people; and they left in the mangroves the *lindaridj* feathered strings, which are now parakeets. The Brother shortened his long penis, and with the piece that was cut off he made a *rangga* emblem.

This completes the myth in so far as the Yirrkalla people are concerned.[2]

When the Djanggawul Beings first landed at Jelangbara they spoke Riradjingu; then, when they went to a Karlpu place, they spoke Karlpu; at Bulmawi they spoke Djarwak; when they reached the eastern shores of Arnhem Bay they spoke Ngeimil, then, as they journeyed on, Dadawi, until they reached the western side of the Bay when they spoke Djambatpingu, as they did also at Elcho Island. At Djiriliwuramaiju they spoke Guruguru. That is, they usually spoke in the dialect of the linguistic groups through whose country they passed, and it is implied that they left these dialects for the people who were removed from the Sisters' uteri.

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the original members of these (the children of the Djanggawul) would of necessity be obliged to carry out incestuous relations. Earlier we read (that is, Footnote 3, p. 45) that the Djanggawul Brother punished his son (or sons), by circumcising them, because they slept with their sisters. Aborigines rationalize by saying that although the Djanggawul children were the first human beings to be placed on the mainland, and from them the *dua* clans and groups were formed, other *jiritja* people were not long in coming, and were placed there by the *jiritja* Ancestral Beings. Some informants, however, prefer the theory that all people, both *dua* and *jiritja*, sprang from a common source, the uteri of the Two Sisters.

[1] This marks the termination of the north-eastern and north-central cultural bloc.

[2] Other versions take the myth farther into western Arnhem Land, and as far as the Goulburn Islands. It is said that at the latter place the Djanggawul gave birth to more people, and that there attempted to circumcise two novices. They made a big shade and danced, as at Elcho Island, but after being circumcised the two youths died. Then the Brother said 'Leave them. If you cut those of the new generation here, they will die.' That is why these people do not practise the rite of circumcision.

Chapter Three

THE CONTENT OF THE MYTH

This myth is further extended and elaborated on its arrival 773
in the Milingimbi region; but since we are considering only the Yirrkalla version, the former will be retained for later study.

Professor Lloyd Warner's version of the Djanggawul myth[1] 773
does not conform either to the Yirrkalla or to the Milingimbi version, as recorded in song and in linguistic text from a wide 114
range of informants. It does, however, more closely approximate the latter, for there, as in Warner's version, only Two Sisters are mentioned and not the Djanggawul Brother. Apparently most of the beginning of the Djanggawul myth was unknown to Warner's informants, for their important journey from Bralgu and landing at Port Bradshaw are omitted altogether.

However, we shall treat first the points which bear some similarity to those mentioned in Warner's version. It is stated that 'our grandfathers came out from the wombs of these women',[2] by 'grandfathers' the natives meaning their original ancestors: but the significance of this remark is not noticed, and the theme of perpetual pregnancy is not treated. The section which relates how the Djanggawul Sisters lost their sacred emblems agrees in most major points, and in this way Warner's version helps to stress the important place held originally by the women, that is, their possession of all the sacred objects and of the power to perform all sacred ritual. This aspect is of fundamental importance when we consider the basic theme of the Djanggawul myth.

[1] L. Warner, *A Black Civilization*, pp. 336–40.

[2] L. Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 337

The Content of the Myth

773 114 The statement that the Two Sisters 'hit themselves on each buttock so they could make plenty of people and their vaginae would grow larger'[1] is quite different from what was mentioned in the Yirrkalla version. The point that their vaginae were small, and not large enough for sexual intercourse, is not found in the above myth. Warner mentions[2] that before their coming there was no land at all, and that they were responsible for making all the islands on the northern coast of Arnhem Land. This again does not conform. Nor does the section relating the incestuous 'rape' of the younger Djanggawul Sister; during the writer's recent work at Milingimbi, Aboriginal informants knew nothing of this. In the Milingimbi version, however, a certain amount of attention is paid to the stone *rangga* which was lodged in the vagina of the younger Sister.[3]

A most important point does appear in Warner's version, where he states that the Two Sisters, when they first came, carried the sun. 'They were the leaders of the sun'; it was just as though it belonged to them. 'In the beginning we had the sun, the water and those Two Women—nothing more.' The sun was first.[4] A close association is inferred here between the Djanggawul Sisters and the Sun (or suns)[5]; and this becomes clearer in the Milingimbi version which we shall present later. The fact that the two daughters of the Sun Woman may be the Two Djanggawul Sisters is further borne out by the sun's association with the red breast feathers of the *lindaridj* parakeets in which is symbolized the redness of the sun. Moreover, the sun's full disc at midday is termed *dagu*, *ganbai*, or *dala*, vagina or vulva, and it is from the vulvae of the Sisters that the sun's rays come (*vide* Milingimbi version of the Djanggawul).

773 831 The dominating feature of the Yirrkalla myth is fertility, the fact that the Djanggawul were responsible for producing the original ancestors of the present Aboriginal people of Arnhem Land. This was their main function; but in treating it the myth offers a great deal of symbolism, in the way of mats, baskets and *rangga* poles, and emblems of male and female organs of generation. All the objects which the Djanggawul brought with them from Bralgu possessed life-giving qualities: the *ngainmara*, the eternally full uterus from which the people came; the *mawulan*, which when plunged into the ground caused water to flow; and the *djuda* poles, from which grew flourishing trees. Associated with all these *dua* moiety emblems were strings of *lindaridj* breast feathers, symbolizing

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[1] L. Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 337.

[2] L. Warner, *op. cit.*, pp. 336, 338 and 340.

[3] L. Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 339.

[4] L. Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 340.

[5] *Vide* Footnote 2, p. 46; see also L. Warner, *op cit.*, p. 337.

the warmth of the sun, which made it possible for all things to live 773
and grow. 831

Apart from the significance of the myth as a whole, there are several interesting features. Throughout this version the incestuous relations of the Djanggawul Brother with his Sisters are acknowledged, and repeatedly mentioned. It is said that when the Djanggawul roamed Arnhem Land, there was no marriage system. The Djanggawul themselves possessed no moieties; it was only later, when their adventures became a matter of mythology, that they were classified as belonging to the *dua* moiety. Informants point out that the Djanggawul made their own laws, and are acknowledged as law-givers. It was through their incestuous intercourse that the Two Sisters were able to produce human beings, to populate the country through which they passed. Even at that early period, the importance of sexual intercourse in relation to pregnancy must [842] have been realized, for the part the male plays in this activity is heavily stressed: the emphasis is such that it cannot be a mere projection of present-day knowledge.

Later in their travels, however, when the Djanggawul arrived at Blue Mud Bay and also at Elcho Island,[1] the Brother seems to have altered his attitude towards incest, and to have 'punished' his sons, by circumcision, for having coitus with their sisters.

It was, nevertheless, the Djanggawul themselves, answerable to 773
no one, who determined their own law, and continued to cohabit together. The present marriage rules of local Aborigines are said to have been instituted by the Djanggawul; apart from sacred ritual, they created and gave to their people the complete structure of their social organization, with its associated culture. Some Aborigines, however, while acknowledging the primary importance of the Djanggawul, hold that other Ancestral Beings and Spirits were responsible for instituting certain features. Other religious cults have indeed come into being, among them the important Laintjung-Banaitja constellation. The Djanggawul, however, are considered responsible for establishing the fundamental pattern of this Aboriginal society.

To-day, when that society and culture are taken for granted by 773
its members, the major importance of the Djanggawul lies in their
sacred ritual and in their doctrine, which, regarded superficially, 182
comprises merely the outline of their travels around the Arnhem 778
Land coast. Underlying that story, however, is a vast wealth of
symbolism and allusion, which will become more apparent after 796
we have presented the great song cycle. It is this symbolism which is expressed in sacred ritual to-day, finding expression in song and

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[1] *Vide* Footnote 5, p. 45.

773 dance, and in the *rangga* emblems and sacred baskets. The *rangga*
poles, although modern in manufacture and decoration, are still
182 the 'same' as those used by the Djanggawul, and contain the very
778 spirit that possessed them in that mythological time: they retain
796 the sacred aura of the Djanggawul.

There is no explanation in the myth for the elongated penis and
773 clitorises of the Djanggawul,[1] except that this special feature makes them unique among Ancestral Beings and Spirits of this area. When they had been cut, the severed fragments were treated as *rangga*, or as feathered pendant strings. Some informants insist that the original *rangga* mentioned in the myth were actually the genitalia of the Djanggawul.

Another interesting point raised in the myth is that the Sisters,
773 when having their clitorises cut by their Brother,[2] were treated as
304 circumcisional novices. Immediately afterwards followed the circumcision ceremony at Elcho Island, said to be instituted by the Djanggawul Brother himself. To-day, however, no circumcision ceremony is associated with the *dua nara* rituals; this feature is relegated to the *djunggawon* and *mandiela*, sponsored by the Wauwalak mythology.[3] The *dua nara* is not age-grading as the myth suggests; but since these rituals appear to be more purely indigenous than, for example, the Wauwalak ceremonies, it is possible that they were originally designed for this purpose. In the course of time the initiatory elements have disappeared from the ritual, but remain in the myth; and to-day the ceremony is revelatory in function.

773 Some inconsistencies appear in the myth, but this is not unusual in mythology which has been handed down through the generations by word of mouth. It is something which must be considered: we must allow for differences in theme, for a variety of versions, and for a considerable range in interpretation. Mythology presented verbally in story or song, no matter how conventional the structure of the society, shows a certain amount of flexibility, since the only means of presenting, and thus of preserving it, must be the individual members of that society. The narrator of a story may stress some particular aspect, elaborating it perhaps to the detriment of others. This process, gradual as it is, has cumulative effects; when, as apparently here, it has been continuing for centuries, we may suppose that the myth, for example the Djanggawul, has altered considerably from its original form. This must be taken into account in our analysis of the myth, and in our interpretation of its meaning.

The fact that the Aborigines pay so much attention to tradition may serve to minimize the number and extent of such alterations 173 and deviation, as found in their mythology. On the other hand, especially on the north-eastern coast of Arnhem Land, these people have been subjected in varying degrees to the infiltration of new ideas.[1] Their society, or for that matter their culture, has not re- [177] mained static through the ages, while they were experiencing various forms of alien contact. Without elaborating on the subject here, however, it seems safe to say that, whatever the extent of past alien contact in Arnhem Land, the majority of these Aborigines appear to have retained, as far as we can tell, the fundamental elements of their traditional outlook. Even if the Djanggawul saga has been considerably altered from its original, we have now no means of discovering what that original was like. We must, then, be satisfied with what knowledgeable Aborigines tell us to-day, learning their interpretations, and the apparent intent of contemporary *nara* rituals.

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[1] *Vide* R. Berndt, *Kunapipi*, Chapters I *c* and IV.

[2] The symbolic significance of these has been treated in the Song Cycle.

[3] *Vide* R. Berndt, *op. cit.*, Chapters I *c* and IV.

The original theme of the Djanggawul was possibly similar in many points to its modern counterpart, for the basic theme of fertility is heavily emphasized, and constantly expressed in symbolism: and symbols to these people provide the material basis upon which they have elaborated their religious thought and ritual.

We shall return to this point in a later chapter. At present we are concerned with inconsistencies; and a possible explanation for these may be found in the fact that tradition, orally transmitted, is not static, but is inevitably dependent on individual variability.

The most obvious inconsistency arises from the statement, at 173 the beginning of the myth, that before the arrival of the Djanggawul in Arnhem Land there 'were only land and sky, animals and birds, foliage and trees . . . and beings of totemic origin.' The Djanggawul, we are told, were responsible for the creation of human beings as we know them to-day. Throughout the myth, however, mention is made of other people, as well as Spirits, with no indication of their having sprung from the Djanggawul. It seems then, that, in addition to totemic beings, there were others who came into contact with the Djanggawul. Aborigines say that before the Djanggawul came there were only 'bird people in the land'; the latter may be taken to mean 'totemic beings' of animal, bird, reptile, fish or vegetable origin. Again, although these natural species 173 were present, the Djanggawul are said to have 'made them *wongar*,' 178 or 'dreaming'. 'Dreaming' is totemic in the sense of being specially

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[1] *Vide* R. and C. Berndt, *Arnhem Land—Its History and Its People*; and also R. and C. Berndt, 'Secular Figures of North-Eastern Arnhem Land,' *American Anthropologist*, 1949, Vol. 51, No. 2, pp. 213–22, with plates.

773 778 possessed of an aura, or spiritual substance, which has been directly obtained in 'the beginning' (that is, in the mythological era) from the Creative Beings (for example, the Djanggawul). The concept of *wongar*, then, rests on the fact that a particular natural species came into association with an Ancestral Being, and was declared sacred by that Being: it became incorporated in the mythology related to that Being, and through this divine connexion became totemic. This process seems to account for the majority of such *wongar*. For example, the Wauwalak tried to cook some animals and vegetables in their fire, at the sacred billabong of Muruwul; but these sprang from the ashes and rushed away, diving into the waters of Muruwul and becoming *mareiin*, sacred, as well as *wongar*.[1] When the Djanggawul reached Arnhem Land, however, they found that some *wongar*, mostly belonging to the *jiritja* moiety, had preceded them. The concept of *wongar*, of course, is not confined to the natural species; it includes all natural phenomena and physiographic features, as well as human beings, in most cases Spirits who through divine association have become *wongar*.

Now the Djanggawul, of super-human ability, making their own laws, creating their own pattern of behaviour, and possessing the power of giving life, were in no sense *wongar*, although the term *wongar* is used loosely in referring to them. They were not in any way totemic, and this is an important distinction. Totemism is merely incidental to them; it is a philosophy embedded in the traditional religion, and not a religion itself. Totemism seems to be an instrument wielded by these Beings to express focal points in their religious ideology, and used extensively to provide symbolic representations.

773 The Djanggawul, on arrival at Port Bradshaw, were thrown into immediate association with the *jiritja* Beings, Laintjung and the Baijini.[2] Laintjung is the *jiritja* male counterpart of the Djanggawul; he, with his son Banaitja and certain associated females, is often said to have been responsible for bringing into being the ancestors of the *jiritja* moiety people. This aspect has never been treated in such detail in the *jiritja* scheme of creation as it has in the *dua*; nevertheless, Laintjung himself was not totemic, but was creative in the same sense that the Djanggawul Brother was. Laintjung, then, is legitimately contemporaneous with the Djanggawul; but

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[1] *Vide* R. Berndt, *Kunapipi*, Chapter III.

[2] *Vide* R. and C. Berndt, 'Sacred Figures of Ancestral Beings of Arnhem Land', *Oceania*, Vol. XVIII, No. 4, pp. 309–26, plates and figures; 'Secular Figures of North-Eastern Arnhem Land', *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 51, No. 2, pp. 213–22; A. P, Elkin, R. and C. Berndt, *Art in Arnhem Land*, pp. 28–31; and R. Berndt, *Kunapipi*, Chapter I *c*, as well as *Arnhem Land—Its History and Its People*.

this does not apply to the Baijini, who are said also to have been 773
present on the Djanggawul's arrival.

The Baijini, although partially mythological are, rather, historical; 773
for they are said to have been the pre-Macassans, primarily traders
and aliens to the coast, and not in any way creative as were the 178
Djanggawul. They are, however, treated in the myth as if contem-
porary with these Ancestral Beings. This inconsistency, which does 182
not conform to other data relating to the Baijini, seems to be a projection of the historical into the mythological past, and for this the necessity for oral transmission, with its reliance on individual narrators, must be held partly responsible. Although an interesting feature, and one which illustrates the flexibility of traditional mythology handed on in this way, contrary material shows that it must be regarded as an introduced element. This being so, one may wonder how many other elements, not apparent to the anthropologist, have been incorporated through the centuries. Alien words or concepts, of course, may be found in many traditional songs and stories, and are not especially apparent in the great Djanggawul cycle. The inclusion of the Baijini, and for that matter of Laintjung, is quite logical from the Aboriginal point of view. It widens the sacred perspective of the *dua*, bringing it, so to speak, up to date; for their religion is a living faith, the scope of which must be broad enough to include all facets of the contemporary situation. Moreover, it serves to explain why the *dua* may use black charcoal when painting their sacred clan designs, and why the *jiritja* may use certain *dua* possessions, such as red feathered string from the *lindaridj* parakeet. In this way it correlates *dua* and *jiritja* belief; and it gives sacred sanction to the *dua* for their use of black colouring, an important consideration from a ritual point of view.

There is another inconsistency, too. We are told that the Djangga- 773
wul are creative, and thus 'super-human': they are, virtually,
Goddesses and a God; and yet they behave in very much the same 776
way that human beings do to-day. They are, that is, made in the 182
image of man; but they are not answerable to man. When they behave in a super-human way—in their creative feats, in the miraculous reappearance of the younger Sister after being killed by sorcery, in their possession of elongated clitorises and penis—they are projections of human wishes and ideals, possessed of qualities which these Aborigines find particularly attractive or important. Such projection, however, may take place only at a subconscious level; the repressed desire for incestuous relations, for example, severely prohibited in everyday life, finds an outlet in mythology. The Djanggawul Sisters represent an ideal of Arnhem Land womanhood —ever bountiful, ever fertile: for this aspect is paramount in the

773 society of north-eastern and north-central Arnhem Land, which
776 places considerable stress on female fertility among both human
182 beings and natural species.

On the whole, however, the Djanggawul are very much like ordinary mortals. They depend on natural resources for food and sustenance; they must walk in order to traverse the country, and use canoes to cross the sea and rivers; they enjoy the satisfaction of coitus, the warmth of the sun and of fire; they sing and perform ritual. Moreover, their super-human powers do not seem to avail them when forced to alter their direction because of a *jiritja* moiety dreaming, or to move their camp, as in the case of the *jiritja* spring water at Elcho Island; or in the case of sorcery, as when Miralaidj was killed. The myth, then, deals with Beings whose behaviour, although they are super-human, approximates that of ordinary man. The myth is correlated with a way of life that the Aborigines know and appreciate, and consequently has a greater hold on their emotions; it involves a faith of which the adherents include all members of the society. The sacred aura of the Djanggawul extends over man, woman and child, bringing them all within the sphere of its religious expression, as manifested in the songs and the ritual.

Another feature is the segregation of the sexes when, in the myth,
773 female children are placed under the *ngainmara* mat, and male
182 children in the coarse grass. This reflects the Aborigine's assumption
that man's rôle in life is rough, his activities are more strenuous
562 than those of women, he takes the initiative in fighting, and altogether carries out the heavier work. His skin too is coarser, from
[826] his original exposure by the Djanggawul, while the contact with
grass resulted in his growing facial hair. Women, on the other hand, were handled with greater care, protected from the harsh glare of the sun, from the rough ground and the grass. Because of this initial treatment, they are supposed to-day to be soft and yielding, with no facial and the minimum of body hair; and they are not, in theory, expected to carry out strenuous work. In reality, however, they are not the demure and submissive creatures idealized in this section of the myth. When the occasion demands, they can undertake equally difficult and strenuous activities, and possibly have greater endurance than men over a period. Nevertheless, the myth implies that they should in some measure conserve their strength to expend in sexual intercourse and childbearing. This twofold distinction between the sexes, on both physical and psychological grounds, is fundamental in local thought, with important effects on expected and actual behaviour. It is most interesting that we should find it expressed, in these terms, in a myth which purports to offer explanations of basic drives in Aboriginal society.

The Content of the Myth

The rôle of women in sacred ritual receives attention in that 773
section of the myth which describes their losing to the men the
sacred dilly bags and *rangga* emblems. This has considerable bearing 562
on the concept of what is rightly sacred and what profane; the theory 182
that women are profane because they do not take an active part in
many religious ceremonies has been the subject of much discussion.[1] 778
Although it is not the place here to discuss the question in any detail, a few points are worthy of notice.[2]

The north-eastern and north-central Arnhem Landers' conception of sacred life, as mentioned, encompasses all members of the society, irrespective of sex. The 'aura' of religion, as they know it, permeates all cultural institutions, from the most simple or mundane to the most complex. According to the Djanggawul ideology woman, in the shape of the Two Djanggawul Sisters, was the source of all religious ritual, a fact which becomes apparent after studying the symbolism of the songs. At the same time, man's complementary part must not be underestimated. It might be suggested that because to-day the myth and associated ritual, with the songs, are now largely in the possession of men, the peculiar reproductive function of females has been more strongly stressed. It is reasonable to suspect, also, that if the Djanggawul had not lost their bag and *rangga* emblems, so that all ritual had remained in the hands of women while men continued to play a subordinate part, the emphasis would have been on the procreative abilities of the male sex.[3]

It is possible to conjecture that, by and large, members of one sex would be more intensely interested in the procreative and sexual function of the opposite sex than in their own. Whether or not the stress on female fertility was an 'original' manifestation,

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[1] *Vide* B. Spencer and F. J. Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, 1938, p. 464; P. Kaberry, *Aboriginal Women, Sacred and Profane*, 1939; C. H. Berndt, *Women's Changing Ceremonies in Northern Australia*, L'Homme, Cahiers d'Ethnologie, de Géographie et de Linguistique, I, Paris, 1950.

Émile Durkheim, in *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, 1926, acknowledged that women's part in Aboriginal sacred life was greater than his direct references would imply (p. 138, footnote 6).

[2] *Vide* A. P. Elkin, R. and C. Berndt, *Art in Arnhem Land*, 1950, pp. 28–33, and R. Berndt, *Kunapipi*, Chapters I *c*, III and IV.

[3] *Vide* M. Mead, *Male and Female*, London, 1950, pp. 102–3, in respect of some New Guinea tribes. 'The basic theme of the initiatory cult . . . is that women, by virtue of their ability to make children, hold the secrets of life. Men's rôle is uncertain undefined . . . man has hit upon a method of compensating himself for his basic inferiority . . . Behind the cult lies the myth that in some way all of this (ritual behaviour) was stolen from the women . . . men owe their manhood to a theft . . .' This is a particularly interesting thesis, which would repay further detailed attention.

773 as the myth would tend to explain, it is now almost impossible to
562 tell. We can say, however, that on the authority of the myth, the
ritual and the songs, together with certain emphases and attitudes
182 current in contemporary Arnhem Land society, it does seem that
778 the source of this religion may be found in female fertility. At the same time the peculiar function of the male, in the sexual act and in procreation, is treated in much symbolic detail. Summing up the relevant treatment of male and female in the Yirrkalla version of the Djanggawul myth, we arrive at the conclusion that both played an equally important part. In the Milingimbi version of the same myth, however, woman's part is stressed to such an extent that the Djanggawul Brother makes no appearance at all in the story.[1]

In the myth the Djanggawul Brother and his companions brazenly stole the bags and *rangga* from the Sisters, offering no compensation in return. Their separate rôles were then automatically reversed, so that women instead of men were obliged to collect food. The crux of the situation, however, is apparent from the remarks made by the Sisters immediately after their ritual exclusion. 'We know everything. We have really lost nothing, for we remember it all, and we can let them have that small part. For aren't we still sacred, even if we have lost the bags? Haven't we still our uteri?' This is still the attitude of the women.[2] Woman herself is still sacred—not merely her procreative organs, her menstrual and afterbirth blood,[3] but herself as a member of the female sex. She did not contest the action of the Djanggawul men because her rôle in society is conventionally one of submissiveness, arising from her treatment when removed from the Djanggawul Sisters' uteri.

However, the whole problem of respective male and female sacredness is too complex for the cursory attention which is all it can receive here. To examine it in detail, from the point of view of north-eastern and north-central Arnhem Land society, would necessitate the presentation of the Wauwalak Song Cycle, an examination of *kunapipi*, *ngurlmag* and *djunggawon* rituals,[4] and a

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[1] Milingimbi version to be presented later. *Vide*, for example, L. Warner, *op. cit.* pp. 336–40.

[2] My wife's work among Yirrkalla and Milingimbi women bears out this statement. Their knowledge of sacred ritual is far more extensive than we have been led to believe, while their active participation is far from insignificant. The same holds good for certain other areas, for example, western Arnhem Land and Central-Western Northern Territory. See C. H. Berndt, *Women's Changing Ceremonies in Northern Australia*, *op. cit.*, 1950.

[3] There is a cultural stress on these features in Arnhem Land society. See *Kunapipi*, Chapter III.

[4] This has been treated briefly in *Kunapipi*, especially Chapter III.

discussion of contemporary behaviour and attitudes. Nevertheless, 773
it is one of the most important issues raised in the myth, and funda- 562
mental in our conception of Arnhem Land religion. By admitting 182
the place of women in ritual life, we extend the function of religion 778
so that it is not solely, or even partially, the prerogative of man. Each sex has its definite and traditionally defined rôle; and by accepting this premise we realize the potential greatness of a faith which has meaning for all the members of the society.

Chapter Four

THE DJANGGAWUL SONGS

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538 THE songs of the *dua nara* include some of the most beautiful literary efforts of Aboriginal Australia. They are poems set to traditional tunes, outlining the activities of the Djanggawul. In essence, they represent the original songs sung by these Ancestral Beings in the Dreaming Times; but through the ages they must have undergone a certain amount of alteration, a process to which they are vulnerable on account of their length. This is not to suggest that their content has necessarily been distorted, but merely that, through the course of generations in a non-literate society, they have not come down to us with exactly the same form and content as when they were sung by the Djanggawul.

538 The songs of north-eastern Arnhem Land, of which some examples have been set out elsewhere,[1] have a unique place in Aboriginal Australia, for they are longer and expressive of greater detail than those found in other areas. In structure and approach they differ from those of, for instance, southern Arnhem Land,[2] or Central-Western Northern Territory.[3]

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182 These songs are poetry in their own right, and express the spirit of the culture to which they belong as, perhaps, no other

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[1] See R. Berndt, 'A Wonguri-Mandjikai Song Cycle of the Moon Bone', *Oceania*, Vol. XIX, No. 1, pp. 16–50; 'Badu, Islands of the Spirits', *Oceania*, Vol. XIX, No. 2, pp. 93–103; C. Berndt, 'Expressions of Grief Among Aboriginal Women', *Oceania*, Vol. XX, No. 4, pp. 286–332, and 'A Drama of North-Eastern Arnhem Land'. Also see R. Berndt, *Love Songs of Arnhem Land*, for publication.

[2] *Vide* R. Berndt, *Kunapipi*, Chapters VII, VIII, X, XI.

[3] C. Berndt, *Women's Changing Ceremonies in Northern Australia*, L'Homme, 1950.

medium can do. In this respect they are inseparable from that 538
culture, expressing as they do something of the Aborigines' sense
of the beautiful, their feeling of strength and sureness in the essential 182
goodness and vividness of their own way of life. This is an important
point, for as these poetic songs stand to-day they represent the
achievement, not of individual men or women, but of the community as a whole. Moreover, this achievement does not belong
to any one era, but is the culminative result of centuries of effort—
how many, we shall probably never know.

The songs are an integral part of the Djanggawul myth and of 733
its ritual, for these three elements are interdependent. The 538
Djanggawul myth, as set out in Chapter 2, is rarely told by a
story-teller; it is, rather, sung out, in the manner of the songs 533
presented here and in following chapters. What is more, no *nara*
ritual is performed without the accompaniment of these songs.

These songs are not merely traditional; they are also sacred, 538
because each is essentially of divine 'composition'. They set out
to describe in detail all the incidents that took place during the 533
wanderings of the Djanggawul, from the time they left their spirit 778
home at Bralgu until they reached the neighbourhood of Milingimbi.[1] There is a certain amount of repetition, beloved of the
Aboriginal song man; there are 'inside' and 'singing' words,
alternatives to those in everyday use, and a wealth of symbolic
allusions. The language of the songs is not archaic or highly [192]
specialized, as found in some areas in reference to sacred singing,
but is for the most part the ordinary language spoken by the
people. This is interspersed with occasional sacred words, 'singing' words, or invocations used only in this context; but essentially the songs are constructed in such a way that all may understand them. They are sung according to a defined traditional rhythm, the words being abbreviated, lengthened or elaborated to meet the requirements of the tune, while the development of the theme proceeds graphically with the help of considerable detail.

These Djanggawul songs express the essence of ceremonial 533
behaviour, and of the relevant mythology, and through them we 182
understand the significance of the *dua nara* and of the Djanggawul
cult. To appreciate them fully, it is necessary to understand thoroughly both the ritualistic background and the mythology, in conjunction with other facets of the cultural pattern of this area. While the song is in progress, participants and onlookers alike are reminded of the intent of the ritual—but not of that intent alone, for these sacred

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[1] As mentioned elsewhere, this journey is extended in the Milingimbi version of the Djanggawul cycle.

533 songs are possessed of a sacred power peculiar to the Djanggawul.[1]

182 The songs, since they 'belong' to the divine Beings, give the ritual an atmosphere of reality, in the sense of veracity, and a deep consciousness of affiliation and continuity with these Beings themselves. Sacred songs, sung on the ceremonial ground by hereditary leaders, in conjunction with ritual and dancing, and in the presence of religious symbols or emblems, vividly reflect and re-inspire the religious emotions of all who hear them.

126 The songs presented here are translations, and have inevitably suffered in the process. To appreciate all the subtle turns of phrase, 538 the abundant allusions and so on, one should read them in the 128 original, interlineally translated, in conjunction with copious notes.[2] It is only through understanding of the language that we can derive the fullest benefit from these songs.

Nevertheless, we have adhered strictly to the literal translation of all words in the songs, endeavouring to retain the beauty of the original. Difficulty has been experienced, however, in finding satisfactory English equivalents for certain words. The translation errs, perhaps, on the side of restraint, for many of the English words used (unlike those in the Aboriginal text) may appear prosaic and lacking in poetic value. The different words referring to sounds of various kinds, for instance, are not easy to transcribe: and 'noise' is a poor, although often necessary, substitute.

No attempt has been made to conform to the original rhythm and metre, since this would involve manipulating the translation at the expense of its actual content. The arrangement into lines conforms to the pauses made by the Aborigines themselves when singing or reciting.

128 Comments or notes are not attached to each song, as in the case of the originals, but any points that seem to need discussion have been referred to in the section immediately following each part of the cycle. For convenience, and to facilitate the gradual development of our analysis, we have set out ten parts to this epic, corresponding to various stages in the travels of the Djanggawul.

As the songs progress, from one stage to another, we may follow the symbolism and intent which have already been indicated in earlier chapters. The significance of each part will be treated briefly at its conclusion, so that at the end of the epic the whole may be viewed in proper perspective.

[1] In *Kunapipi* (*op. cit.*, Chapter VII) it was said that 'the songs are the echo of those first sung by the Ancestral Beings: the spirit of the echo goes on through timeless space, and when we sing, we take up the echo and make sound.' This applies also to the Djanggawul songs.

[2] These are to be published separately through the journal *Oceania* as a monograph, on account of the great number of phonetic texts. The serious reader or student is advised to read these in conjunction with the translations set out here.

Chapter Five

THE DJANGGAWUL SONG CYCLE

PART ONE

In which the Djanggawul cross the sea from Bralgu Island, and eventually reach the Arnhem Land mainland for the first time.

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Song 1

ALTHOUGH I leave Bralgu, I am close to it. I, Djanggawul,
  am paddling . . .
Paddling with all the paddles, with their flattened taperin
ends.
Close I am coming, with Bildjiwuraroiju,
Coming along from Bralgu. We splash the water as we paddle,
  paddling wearily,
With Miralaidj, undulating our buttocks as we paddle.
We paddle along through the roaring tide, paddle a long way.
I am paddling along fast, through the rough sea . . .
Beside me is foam from our paddling, and large waves follow us.
With Bralbral, we move our wrists as we paddle, making noise as
  we go through the sea . . .
We, Djanggawul, are paddling along, lifting our paddles, slowly
  going along . . .
All the way we have paddled. I rest my paddles now, as we glide.
On the sea's surface the light from the Morning Star shines as we move,
Shining on the calmness of the sea.
Looking back I see its shine, an arc of light from the Morning
  Star. The shine falls on our paddles, lighting our way.
We look back to the Morning Star and see its shine, looking back
  as we paddle.

539 Star moving along, shining! We saw its disc quite close,
Skimming the sea's surface, and mounting again above Bralgu.
533 Close to us it rises above the expanse of sea; we look back, seeing its shine.
Morning Star, sent by the dancing Spirit People, those people of the rain, calling out as they dance there with outstretched arms.
They send it for us, that we may travel along its shining path from Bralgu.
Close, its 'feathered ball' appears above Dangdangmi! Close is the Morning Star, on the end of its string and pole!
Close is the Morning Star, stretching from its pole, extending out from its string . . .
Shining from Bralgu, as we paddle through the sea.
Bubbles rise to the sea's surface; our canoe is carried on the crest of waves. Ah, *waridj* Bralbral!
Sound made by our splashing paddles, and the sea's roar as we rise to the crest of a wave!
We make our paddles sound, with the noise of the sea, sound that is heard far away at Bralgu.
We, the Djanggawul, make sound with our paddling, make spray as we paddle fast . . .
The salty smell! The roaring sea, and its foam! Its wide expanse behind us!
We paddle, with Bildjiwuraroiju, following the waves along,
Pushing our way through the waves that block us
Sound from our sacred *ngainmara* mat! Noise as the waters surge around it!
Sound, as the sacred poles are moved about with the rolling of the canoe!

Song 2

We Djanggawul saw the Morning Star shining . . . ,
Saw its shine on the green-backed turtle, lighting up its throat . . . !
Paddling, we saw that turtle: saw its eyes open, its flippers outstretched as it floated.
Sea water lapped at its shell, spreading across its back.
Making a sound as it rose above the surface; see the dilly bag at its back!
It swam through the sea, with shell like a rock, hiding the bag under its flipper.
'I have another basket' (the turtle says). 'It is the cuttle fish.'

The Djanggawul Song Cycle

Song 3

Paddling we hear a sound; 539
A fish jumped to the water's surface; 533
A catfish! a sawfish! For us that fish jumps!
A flying fish, making a noise as it jumps, splashing the water . . .
A sawfish beside us; for it hears the sound of our canoe, the canoe of the Djanggawul.
Fish jumping! Sawfish, splashing the water with its nose!

Song 4

I, Djanggawul, am leaving Bralgu, paddling away from there, paddling fast.
The sweep of the paddle of Miralaidj, out in the deep sea, far from the mainland!
Paddling fast as we smell the Baijini from far away.
Sound within the water, as we pull on our paddles! Bildjiwuraroiju paddling . . .
Coming close to the mainland, splashing as we skim through the open sea . . .
See the shine of the Morning Star, as we look back, shining from Bralgu.
Sound of our narrow paddle . . . paddling along.
Spray falls across the canoe, coming strongly in from the heavy sea.
Close up! Paddling against the strong high tide; waves spread out as we go, waves from our paddling:
Waves that roar as they spread—coming from us, from our canoe.
Spraying like rain, churning to foam. The smell of the sea!
We paddle fast through the sea, for we hear the distant sound of the Baijini,
Sound and sea smell from them, from far away, spreading across the sea's expanse . . .
Carefully we must go, for the sea is rough, Miralaidj. Let us rest on our paddles, Bralbral. (They are speaking to one another.)
Sound of the sea from the Djanggawul's paddling!

Song 5

What is that we hear? A sea goose skims the water's surface.
It is for us, *waridj*! (They say as they paddle.) It comes from Buragumi, from the mainland.

539 As we paddle, what blocks our way? Flocks of sea geese alight on the water before them,
533 Hearing Bralbral and the Djanggawul talking. Flocks of birds alight on the water.
Flocks of birds, like hordes of people, people whom we shall put on the mainland.
Paddling we see them skimming the sea's surface, in the glistening rays of the Morning Star:
Resting on the sea's surface, from their home at Port Bradshaw.
See them as we move our arms in paddling, paddling slowly.
Grey crested birds . . . emerging from the mouth of the *ngainmara* mat!
They see the Djanggawul, paddling along . . . beautiful birds! As Bildjiwuraroiju, Miralaidj and Bralbral paddle.
We see the shine of the Morning Star, as we look back,
See the shine that radiates from its disc; we turn as we paddle . . .
It shines on the ebbing tide, shine reaching out from Bralgu.
As we paddle we see the shine moving . . .
As we paddle through the glistening water, it follows us . . .
Going through the great wide sea . . . through the path of light . . .
Morning Star suspended on end of string, from a sapling pole,
Its 'feathered ball' close to us: now skimming the sea's surface, now rising once more. Shining on us!

Song 6

What is that which blocks us? The whale!
As we paddle, we see its gaping mouth. What is that?
Spray and sea splash as it moves.
We paddle gently, for we see the open mouth of the whale.
What is this swimming? Our *ngainmara* mat, swimming under the water!
Water swirling! We hear the noise of the water, and of its spray.
We saw it out at sea, a long way from Bralgu—spray from the swimming whale.
Water rises and swirls, with noise caused by the whale: spray and foam from the whale . . .
As we paddle, we see it swimming. Bralbral calls to the Djanggawul,
It is our mat, our basket! Let us take some. The others we leave in the sea!
Waves rise from the large *ngainmara* mats that they leave behind, swirling waters spraying from them!

Water comes in from them, coming to us: foaming, spraying and roaring, out on the sea!

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Song 7

Splashing, a fish swishes its tail as it rises, close to the whale's 'whiskers'.
A splashing catfish, turning over on to its belly . . .
From Bralgu, from the mouth of the whale . . .
It splashes, its spike protrudes as it swims before the gaping mouth of the whale,
Splashing and chasing it. 'I (says the whale) am splashing. I chase this fish, under the water.'
Touching the fish with its 'whiskers'. The catfish splashes . . .
Splashes before the open mouth of the whale,
Spraying, dragging its spike through the sea . . .
  And the noise of the sea, being churned up . . . !
Waves rising and splashing, caused by fish . . .
Noise of the water and foam from that fish . . .
Waves spreading out, spraying and splashing, caused by the fish . . .

Song 8

What is that? A sea egg!
We must paddle with care, with the spade paddle, dragging it through the sea as we rest.
Oh *waridj* Bralbral! Oh *waridj* Miralaidj! It is a stranger to us, from Bralgu.
Sea eggs forming in lines, with their spiny 'hands',
Drift with the waves in the calm sea, spread with the moving waves,
Drift on the surface, glistening in the shine of the Star.
The continuous lap of the sea, and its waves! Lines of sea eggs spreading across the sea!
Strangers! At the fringe of the shine of the Star from Bralgu, they spread out in the rising waves . . . The sound of the sea . . . !
Paddling, the Djanggawul see these eggs, as they move their shoulders . . .
Their heads are grey. They have paddled far, and the salt water has whitened their hair.
They are tired from paddling.
They pause as they see the eggs . . .

539 Drifting in the calm sea, their lines spreading, their short 'hands' moving:
533 Sea eggs we see as we paddle. Gently we drag our paddles along, as we rest them.
We paddle through the shine from the Morning Star, from Bralgu, slowly along as we see these eggs.

Song 9

What is that, *waridj* Miralaidj? Drag our paddles carefully.
See them, as the Djanggawul paddle fast.
They see them emerging from the water, coming up from Bralgu . . .
A green turtle we see in the water, making a sound . . . ,
See it through the shine of the Morning Star, shining on its throat as it swims . . .
See it moving its shoulders; see its shell . . .
We see it rise to the water's surface, its flippers 'paddling'.
Carefully we are moving our shoulders, as we are paddling. Let us rest, *waridj* Bralbral.
They see its shell shining as slowly it rose, catching the rays from the Star . . .
Floating on the crest of a wave, and making a noise,
Close to them as they paddle . . .
The Djanggawul move their buttocks, paddling fast. Noise from their paddle movements!

Song 10

What is that blocking us, *waridj* Bralbral? Carefully we must paddle.
Resting on paddles, dragging them, we see that stranger from Bralgu,
Stranger drift-wood, revealed in the shine of the Star . . . ,
Carefully moving our arms, we see it drifting by . . .
Making sounds as it drifts, splashing and making waves,
This stranger from Bralgu: drift-wood, drifting and splashing . . .
Pushed by the waves, and making a noise, drifting, and sending out foam . . .
Spray from the sea! Spray from away at Bralgu . . .
Foam all over the sea, stretching out from Port Bradshaw . . .
'I leave the foam on my body,' says the drift-wood. Foam stretching from Walbinboi Island!

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We see it close as we paddle. Drag our paddles, *waridj* Bralbral, *waridj* Djanggawul.
Foam and spray spread all over the sea, stretching out from Port Bradshaw . . .
See our heads! Grey from paddling, from salt and foam!
The Djanggawul are tired . . . See Bildjiwuraroiju paddling carefully, Bralbral undulating his buttocks.
It (the wood) is a stranger from Bralgu, from the source of the Star's shine. 15

Song 11

What is that crying? Careful! We must rest from paddling, *waridj* Bralbral. 1
We hear a sound. What is that now? A plover, *waridj*, hovering above the drifting timber.
It has seen our canoe, and circles about it.
It cries as it circles about the drift-wood, goes soaring cloudwards,
Cries as it swoops about the drift-wood. *Waridj*, it circles round and round our canoe. 5
Paddle carefully, Djanggawul, rest on our oars.
Its screeching cry sounds over the waters from Bralgu, mingling with the roar of the sea, spreading across it.
Sound as it skims the sea's surface, sound from its splashing; and foam!
The birds and clouds leave that cry for us, *waridj* Bralbral. It is a message for us . . .
Its cry echoes back from the clouds, as it circles around and cries through its beak: 10
Screeching that comes through its beak, up from its throat, reaching up to the sky.
Its eye is keen; it sees our canoe, and all within it, and sees the drifting wood.
Up and down goes its cry. The bird flies with hanging claws. Its eyes are closed, but the eye of its anus is open.
See, a message for us, *waridj* Bralbral!
The noise of its cry, as it circles! Foam covers the sea! It cries as it circles, away out from Port Bradshaw. 15

Song 12

We paddle fast, *waridj*, moving our arms. Bralbral, we paddle fast. 1
We have come far from the island of Bralgu. What is that shining, *waridj* Miralaidj?

539 The Morning Star shines on us, as we paddle along. See the Star shining!
533 Lift up the paddle carefully, *waridj!* Bralbral paddles, moving his buttocks.
Now we are paddling fast, moving our shoulders, lifting the narrow paddle:
Swaying our hips as we paddle. We have left Bralgu behind us, *waridj* Djanggawul.
We follow that Baijini sound, smelling the mainland, and paddling fast.
We must rest on the paddles, *waridj*. Going along, we hear the sound of the Baijini talking.
We paddle in on the morning tide, in through the breakers . . .
Our water is rushing onwards; from somewhere it must be ebbing.
Sound of the surf: waves from our paddling: splashing—foam from the surf!
Waves arise from our paddling, *waridj* Bralbral . . .
We are paddling fast along, sweeping our paddles . . .
Tired from paddling, with head grey from the foam . . . Oh Bildjiwuraroiju!
We are paddling fast, we are close to land, to Port Bradshaw.

Song 13

What is that, *waridj* Bralbral? Carefully drag the paddle, resting it on the canoe.
What is that, moving there? Those, *waridj*, are sponges, spreading their formless 'arms'.
We see them as we rest on our paddles, scratching ourselves from the sponges . . .
The Djanggawul are tired. This is a sponge, *waridj*! We saw the formless 'arms' moving along . . .
Paddling along, we see the ebbing tide. We saw the sponges, and heard the roar of the sea.
I am tired, like these drifting sponges, *waridj*; so let us rest our paddles . . .
We paddle fast when we hear the sound of the Baijini: the smell of the sea!

Song 14

We are paddling fast, *waridj* Djanggawul, moving our arms fast as we paddle.
We lift up our paddles, swishing quickly along . . .
A black porpoise follows our paddling and splashing.

Carefully, *waridj* Bralbral, rest your paddle, dragging along. Water swirls from our paddling,
Spray follows behind us. We smell the Baijini, hear the sound that they make.
We paddle fast as we hear the Baijini; and the smell of the sea, from their fires.
Carefully, *waridj* Miralaidj, we move our arms, paddling quickly, swaying our hips,
Lifting the narrow paddle. We are reaching Port Bradshaw.
Soon we shall leave behind us the noise from our swishing paddles.
Spray and surf on the rolling tide, white foaming breakers, all from our paddling, *waridj* Bralbral, *waridj* Djanggawul.
We paddle in through the big waves, through the roar of the surf caused by our paddling.
We rest on our oars. Foam from our swishing paddles stains and patterns our bodies from Bralgu, far out at sea.

Song 15

What is that, *waridj* Bralbral? Carefully rest your paddles. What is blocking us?
A huge black sawfish, seen in the shine of the Morning Star,
Sawfish with gaping jaw and barbs, seen through the shine of the Star.
What is that, *waridj*? Two sawfish swimming, long black sawfish.
Carefully we go, letting our paddles drag through the water.
The Djanggawul, tired from travelling, see them through the shine of the Star.
We paddle quickly, and see the sawfish rise, with a loud noise as they turn in the water.
Loud noise from that, *waridj*! And water comes up. The jaw of the fish pushes the waves along, and makes spray.
Where is this spray coming from, *waridj*? We are paddling fast, swishing along through the water.
We move our arms carefully, *waridj* Bralbral, swaying our buttocks, making a noise as we paddle fast . . .
So we may reach Port Bradshaw . . .
Paddling quickly, we move our arms; and our heads are grey . . .

Song 16

What is that drifting along by us, *waridj*? Carefully we rest our paddles, dragging them through the sea.

The Djanggawul Song Cycle

539 Bralbral, it is a small sawfish, seen in the shine of the Morning Star . . .
533 Carefully we are paddling, swaying our buttocks. Djanggawul, this is a fish blocking us . . .
Paddling we see its back, and its saw, and the ripples it makes on the water. Paddling we see the sawfish.
Carefully we must go, *waridj* Bralbral, swaying our buttocks gently.
What is blocking us now? Its tail blocks us, 'paddling' and lashing the water.
We hear the roar of the sea from Bralgu across to the mainland.
We paddle, hearing the sawfish splashing and churning the water, fighting smaller fish.
We are smelling the sea and paddling fast. We saw the tide flow in, and the waves breaking.
We paddle, hearing the noise of the fish, and the waves breaking.

Song 17

Carefully rest the paddle, *waridj* Bralbral. What is this blocking us, Oh *waridj* Djanggawul?
A young porpoise, a stranger from Bralgu, we see through the shine.
Porpoise born in fresh water. It splashes, turns on its side, hitting the sea with its tail: veins in its tail . . .
Carefully we drag our paddles through the sea, splashing towards Port Bradshaw, smelling the sea . . .
Its jaw protrudes from the sea: young porpoises come swimming behind the canoe . . .
Coming from the fresh water, *waridj*, from Bralgu, from the land of the Spirits.
They made a crying sound, through the fat of their heads, spouting up sprays of water . . .
Swimming from Bralgu as they hear the paddling, the moving of shoulders.
Carefully we must paddle, *waridj* Djanggawul, lifting the narrow paddle, and moving fast . . .
Moving our buttocks, swaying our hips as we paddle. We saw the porpoises, heard the noise of their spraying,
Sound of the water, with foam from the splashing of young porpoises,
Chasing fish, which circle around, swimming under the water.
We see them as we paddle, through the shine of the Morning Star . . .

The Djanggawul Song Cycle

Song 18

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What is that blocking us, *waridj* Djanggawul? Carefully rest our paddles, *waridj* Bralbral. 1
It is a bird, that cries as it swoops along, circling about our canoe, *waridj* Miralaidj.
It stretches its neck as it cries, gliding with outstretched wings, *waridj*, giving us strength for paddling.
Our seagull dives to the water, sending out spray with its beak as it skims the surface . . .
That bird, *waridj*, goes flying up and down, shaking itself dry: 5
Carefully we paddle, dragging the paddles along, as we hear that bird.
The female gull, with its beak, cries out as it sees the dark rain clouds rising.
The seagull cries out at the time of the wet season: it thinks of nesting.
Gliding along, it thinks of its home at Bremer Island.
Diving it skims the water, sending out spray. Its eyes can see in the night. It shakes itself dry. 10
We paddle fast as we smell the sea, smell where the Baijini are.
The seagull splashes the water, making a noise, giving us power to go quickly.
We move our wrists fast, swaying our hips as we paddle.
We are moving fast, *waridj*: hear the swish of our paddles.
Our heads are grey from the foam . . . we are tired from paddling. 15

Song 19

What is blocking us? Carefully drag our paddles, *waridj* Bralbral (says Djanggawul). 1
An immense sawfish! Carefully rest our paddles Djanggawul. It is a large sawfish.
What shall we do? We shall continue to paddle.
See its saws and its gaping mouth! *waridj*, are those its teeth?
Leave it swimming behind, for it whips up the sea with its jaws . . . 5
Carefully, *waridj*, let us paddle quickly and go. We saw it through the shine of the Morning Star.
Carefully swaying our buttocks, we leave it behind, lying under the surface . . .
There, near Port Bradshaw, it swirls the water, making a hollow noise:
We paddle fast as we smell the sea . . . Bones of that fish, large vertebrae like an expanse of sea.
Waridj, we move our hips as we travel fast, leaving it lying there, 10

539 Where it lives in the rough sea, for it is ferocious: it carries a 'poison bag'. The sawfish clan is always wanting to fight,
533 Always looking for trouble, always ferocious. It swims along with its bag of poison, that enters the teeth of its saw . . .
'I (says the fish) make the sea rough from my anger. No canoe may come near me, or near my saws. I make the sea rough, I have poison!'
Let us paddle fast, *waridj*, it may attack us. Go fast, *waridj* Bralbral . . .
Shoulders moving, we plunge down our paddles. We, *waridj* Djanggawul, drag on our paddles and rest them. 15
Hear the sound of the incoming tide, *waridj*, let us go fast!
The high tide is flowing and roaring, ebbing from somewhere:
We see that fish in the shine of the Morning Star . . .
We plunge down our paddles, paddling fast, moving our buttocks, *waridj* Djanggawul. Smell the sea and hear the Baijini sound . . . !

Song 20

What is that, *waridj*? Carefully sway our buttocks, Bralbral, with dragging paddle. 1
This is sea-weed floating, a mass of sea-weed floating . . .
Waridj, it is a stranger from Bralgu, this floating weed, with fragments dislodging and drifting away.
It drifts into rows spreading out with the waves. Blown by the wind, it drifts backwards and forwards—spreading across the water.
Roar of the sea as it carries the weed on the incoming tide, and the spray of the surf! 5
We saw it through the shine of the Morning Star, there on our way to Port Bradshaw from Bralgu.
Let us go fast, *waridj* Djanggawul. Moving our arms quickly and swaying our buttocks, we lift up the paddles.
Far we have paddled. Is that spray, rising before us?
Is that the sea smell we follow? Is that the Baijini sound we hear?
Let us paddle fast, *waridj*, quickly, moving our buttocks, as the waves rush in, the high tide breaks on the beach . . . 10
Carefully, *waridj*. Djanggawul, moving his buttocks, lifts up his narrow paddle.

Song 21

What do we see, *waridj*, as we look back? 1
Paddling, we see the shine of the Morning Star.
Yes, *waridj* Bralbral, paddling we see it close to us. The Morning Star sends out its rays as it rises near us:

The Djanggawul Song Cycle

It skims the water, shining across the sea, the Bralgu Star, its rays shining near us. 539
It skims the sea, from Bralgu, shining upon us, on the end of its string, attached to a young sapling. 5 533
Another Star, *waridj*, a feathered ball held by the Spirits . . . Close is the Morning Star . . .
It shines near, as we turn to see it. Oh, Morning Star, Oh pole and strings . . .
The Star and its rays rise gradually for us, *waridj* Miralaidj; we rest our paddles, dragging them through the sea.
See the shine from the disc of the Star, close to us, *waridj.*
The Bralgu Spirits are dancing, sending the Star . . . 10
Rain people, the stamping sound of their dancing . . . ! Dust rises, *waridj*, from under their dancing feet . . . !
There from the fresh water place, from the Spirit country.
The shine falls on us, from Bralgu, covering us with its shine . . . Close, it shines across to the mainland, to Port Bradshaw.
The morning Star shines, bringing the dawn . . . putting an end to the night . . .
Close to us, ending the darkness, bringing the dawn . . . 15
It pierces the darkness, that Star, sent by the Spirits. The sound of their dancing!
The morning Star shines from Bralgu, shines like the *mauwulan* pole . . .
It rises from the sandhills at Bralgu, where the Spirits dance, *waridj*, for us.
We move fast with the narrow paddle; we hasten, moving our wrists, as the tide roars in.
For the daylight is on us, the dawn, before the cry of the morning pigeon. The Star still shines for us, *waridj* Djanggawul. 20
Our hips and buttocks are swaying. Let us go carefully, because of the water,
It is rising for us, and roaring, with foam and spray of the surf.
We push the water along with our canoe, our paddles swishing.
Waves come up, with the rising tide. Spray comes from our swishing paddles. From us the tide is flowing.
Is that the mainland we are approaching from Bralgu? 25
Is that the mainland, Port Bradshaw, we are approaching . . . ?
The smell of the sea! *Waridj*, we paddle fast, quickly moving our wrists.
We lift up the narrow paddles—*waridj* Bralbral, our paddles . . .
We lift up the big paddles, moving fast, swishing the paddles . . .
Our paddles! We drag them along, the flat and the narrow paddles . . . 30

The Djanggawul Song Cycle

Song 22

539 What is that, *waridj*, in front of us? We rest, dragging our paddles. 1
533 There ahead of us, *waridj* Bralbral.
That is the morning pigeon. Darkness goes, with its cry!
We saw darkness only towards the west . . .
Bird that 'twists' its tongue as its whistles! Daylight comes with its cry. 5
We saw the calmness of dawn (no sound but the pigeon's cry).
It ruffles itself, *waridj*, crying, and shaking its feathers. Its cry goes out to its nestlings.
The small clear cry of that pigeon and of its nestlings . . .
Talking fast from their nest . . . The pigeon flies down from the smooth inside of the nest. Their cries reach us, 'twisting' their tongues . . .
We saw the Morning Star ending the darkness. Then, the cry of the pigeon! Cries like the speech of different linguistic groups, like the Madarlpa dialect! 10
The bird talks fast, a sound like the Dalwongu dialect . . .
If flew across from its nest in the 'arm-band' bushes . . .
It teaches that cry to its young: the nestlings ruffle themselves.
Teaching that cry! It calls from the limbs near its nest. They are 'twisting' their tongues . . .
We saw it, flying down, as the darkness was clearing, 'twisting' its tongue and whistling. 15

Song 23

We paddle fast, moving our buttocks, *waridj*. We lift up the narrow paddle . . . 1
We paddle fast, with the narrow paddle . . . We speed along, *waridj* Djanggawul . . .
Wei! What is that, *waridj*? We rest our paddles, Bralbral, and drag them.
That, *waridj*, is the long drawn cry of the black bird.
Crying out, for it saw the darkness clearing . . . 5
What is that? The sound of the black bird, long drawn as the darkness clears.
It saw the coming dawn, and the calmness.
What is that, *waridj*? A black bird crying, at dawn, and the cry of the nestlings!
Crying with mouths agape, as they hear the roar of the waves, and smell the sea,
As they hear the noise of the water, the foam and the spray. 10

The Djanggawul Song Cycle

'I (says the bird) heard the noise of the water rising, the incoming tide . . . 539
I draw out my sound, it reaches out to Port Bradshaw . . . 533
A long cry, moving my head, as I see the water rising, and see the spray . . .
Nesting among the limbs of the "coffee" tree, of the *djuda rangga* . . .'
It grasps the tree with its claws, crying from that sacred tree,
Sending out its cry, as the big waves rise and spray.
The sea roars as the bird cries, and the sound reaches up to the clouds,
A long-drawn sound entering the banking clouds, the cloud-flecked sky.
A long cry, as it saw the tide roaring in, with its spray
'I saw the spray. I cry out as the waves come splashing together.
I saw the water, and saw them paddling fast. The smell of the sea!
I saw the tide coming up. The Baijini sound, the smell of the sea!
I saw the water, roaring, as the waves came in at Port Bradshaw, coming from Bralgu.'
Foam coming up, and spreading. The bird cried as it looked at the water.
The crest of the surf shines in the light of the Morning Star. The sea roars, and the waves are splashing together.
The bird saw the darkness clearing, uttering its long cry as the dawn came,
The cry in the stillness, as the darkness cleared (with the light) from Bralgu!

Song 24

What is that, *waridj* Bralbral? We rest our paddles at the cry, and drag them along.
We look round to see the cry. It comes from Bralgu. It's close to us!
It is coming up, moving along. The sun, with its *mauwulan rangga* emblem!
As it rises, its rays warm the Djanggawul's backs. It comes rising, close to them.
The sun, with rays emerging before its disc! Close, it shines on the water, warming our backs, *waridj* Djanggawul.
Close it is rising, from the sand, from the sea into the sky.
Hot sun, burning our backs, its rays leading back to Bralgu!
Rising sun, reflected in the sea! Sun for us, with its heat!
Rays of the sun emerging, *waridj*, leaving its home beneath the water!
Sun coming up close, with spreading rays!

539 For us, *waridj*, it leaves its home under the sea.
533 Its rays touch us like hands; their reflections shine in the water.
We go fast. Paddling along we see the rays touching us, so that the sweat comes out.
The sun comes up for us, leaving its home; the glare is hurting our eyes.
It comes closer, rising above the sea, burning our backs.
The smell of the sea! It leaves its home in the water, and warms us . . .
We paddle fast, to Port Bradshaw, to the Place of the Sun, to where the Baijini are.
Reflections shine in the sea. The rays warm us, on our way to Port Bradshaw.
We lift up our paddles, *waridj*, we go fast but carefully, moving our arms and our buttocks.
The sun reaches us, with its rays. Its red glow, *waridj*, for us, from the sacred parakeet feathers!
We rest our paddles. It is for us! We paddle fast, *waridj*, and carefully.
Our buttocks are moving. It is for us, *waridj* Djanggawul! We paddle fast!
Our hips sway as we paddle along, lifting the paddles,
On our way to the Place of the Sun, at Port Bradshaw.
The sun's rays touch us, warming our backs . . .
Rays like the parakeet-feathered string of our *rangga*! Feathered string like our child! Red glow of the sun.
Rays warming our backs, like feathered string! Like feathered *rangga*!
That sun rises above us, burning our backs, going to the Place of the Sun.
It burns our backs, and it shines on the water at Lilildjang.
Its warm rays touch us, stretching to Arnhem Bay . . .
It leaves its home in the water, and rises, burning.
Warm rays touching our backs, touching our *rangga*! Shining, and making the mainland clear to see!
For us it shines on the sacred sandhills at Port Bradshaw . . .
Stretching out its rays, warming our backs, illuminating the waterholes at Arnhem Bay . . .
That sun, sending out its rays to Elcho Island,
Burning our backs, from the red ochre there . . . at Elcho Island . . .
That sun sends out its rays to shine on the sea, *waridj*, on the mainland near Milingimbi . . . ,
Warming our backs, as it reaches west to the wide Barara country.

The Djanggawul Song Cycle

Song 25

We go fast, moving our wrists, and lifting our paddles.
We paddle along, *waridj* Bralbral, as the sun's rays touch us, and touch our paddles.
Our buttocks and hips sway, as we paddle along:
What is that? What is that cry?
Flying foxes, suspended there in the tree, *waridj* Djanggawul, crying out from the tree.
We saw the sacred tree, the sacred *rangga*. Flying foxes, in the sacred tree!
Little flying foxes crying, as they hold that sacred tree . . . !
They cry from their home, where they hang among the branches of the sacred tree,
Cry from the topmost branches, from all the branches of the tree . . .
They cry from their home: crying, *waridj*, from the sacred Leichhardt fig tree.

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Song 26

We go fast, lifting our paddles, moving our wrists . . . we are close to our country.
We go fast, moving our buttocks; for we hear the roar of the sea, the spray of the surf,
Coming up from our paddling! Foam from our paddling!
Wail *waridj* Bralbral, carefully drag the paddles, for they are splashing up foam.
What has happened? Sea smell, and splashing!
What, *waridj*, is that? Wail Our feathered arm-bands!
What has happened? They are wet from that foam.
We are all getting wet! What shall we do? Throw away the wet *rangga*?
They are wet from that foam, our *rangga*, *waridj* Bralbral: wet from lying in water! We are nearing Port Bradshaw.
Shall we, *waridj*, undo it, then throw it away? No, let the sacred mat with the *rangga* sink down, near the Place of the Sun.
We shall not untie its 'mouth' . . . Let it sink down into the sea, outside Port Bradshaw . . .
Sacred invocations to the *rangga* and *ngainmara* . . . ! We invoke the *bugali* as it sinks . . . , calling the sacred names.
They sink down, making a noise as the sea covers them.

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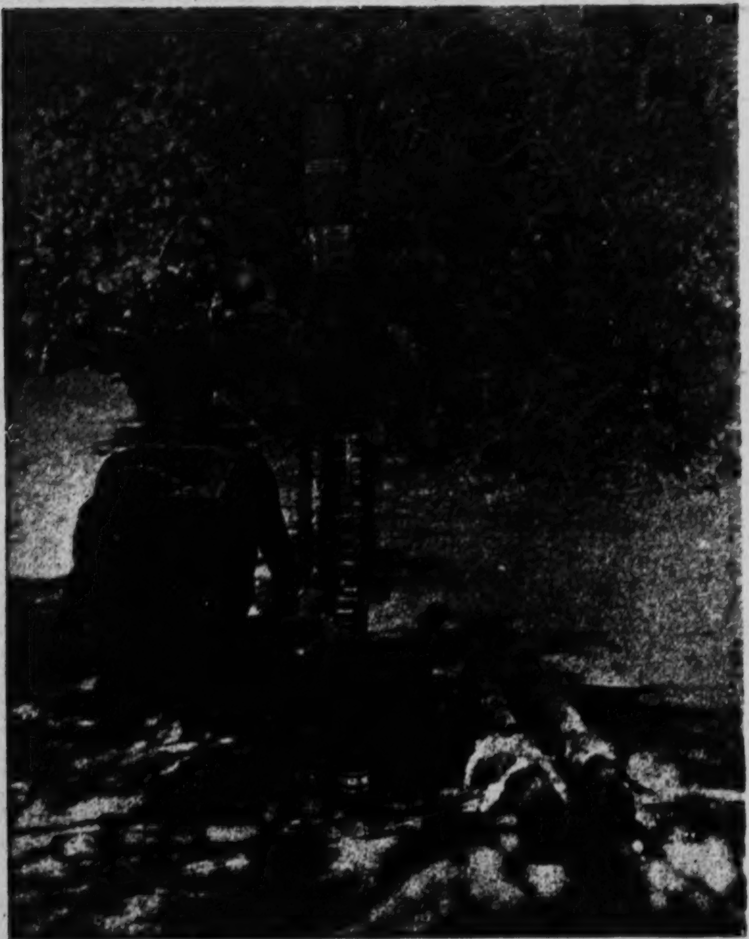

8. The Goanna Tail *rangga* shown by Mauwulan, a ceremonial leader.

[facing p. 80]

The Djanggawul Song Cycle

Song 27

539 Let us rest on our paddles, *waridj*, for I (Bralbral) am tired.
Stop paddling, *waridj*.
633 What is happening there, *waridj*? (Bralbral says) My body aches with tiredness.
Tired, because you are worrying (about the mat containing the *rangga*).
I am worrying (says the Djanggawul Brother) about the *rangga*. (Why didn't we open the mat?)
I am just tired! That was why, *waridj*, we threw away the sacred *rangga* and mat.
We are coming close to the mainland: our journey, our paddling, is done.
We land on the beach at Port Bradshaw.
That is our country! We plant our *mauwulan* here.
We have arrived, oh *waridj*!

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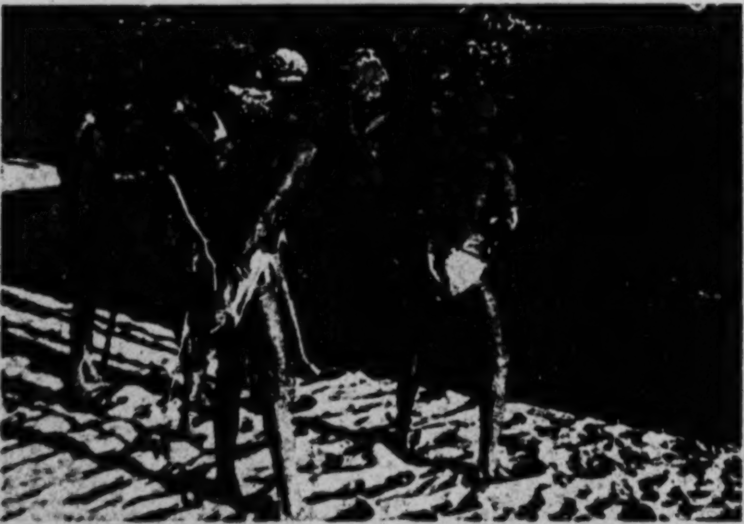
9. Postulants dancing the Incoming Tide, entering the sacred ground.



10. Calling of invocations before the emergence of sacred emblems.

[facing p.81]

Chapter Six

COMMENTS ON PART ONE OF THE SONGS

THIS first section of the saga introduces us to the Djanggawul 539
and their companion Bralbral, and sets the stage for succeeding parts. It purports to show their immediate origin, and tells how the sacred *rangga* emblems and the mat were brought to the Arnhem Land coast.

The Djanggawul leave the Spirit Land of Bralgu, and paddle across to Port Bradshaw in their bark canoe. They are guided by the rays of the Morning Star, and in the light from this they see various creatures; it is only in the final songs (21–4) that the Star light gives place to that of the sun. In these colourful songs, the north-eastern Arnhem Landers suggest that the Djanggawul have travelled all the way from Bralgu in a kind of twilight, but as they reach the mainland the sun arises, warming them and illuminating various sacred sites (Song 24). This implies, subtly, their association with the sun.

Song 24 treats the sun as a separate identity, although we have 539
seen (in Chapters 2 and 3) that there is, in fact, a close association, 776
if not complete identification. Line 20, Song 24 speaks of 'Its red glow . . . from the sacred parakeet feathers . . .' This refers to the red glow below the sun, seen as it rises. It is said that the sun [821]
is a *dua* moiety woman, and this glow is from her waist-band of human hair string (*ngadiba*) into which are woven red breast feathers from the *lindaridj* parakeet. They were given her by the Djanggawul Brother himself, and when in the sky she always wears this belt. The Djanggawul Brother calls her *gadu* (that is, daughter, man speaking), although in other versions the Brother may call her *ngandi* 'mother', for the Sun Woman's two daughters may be

Comments on Part One of the Songs

539 identified with the Djanggawul Sisters (*vide* Chapters 2 and 3). 776 The red parakeet feathered string is a material representation of the sun's rays, which it symbolizes when attached as a pendant to a *rangga*, and spread out like the rays; the red feathers are said to [82] represent the heat of the sun. The Sun Woman not only wears the feathered waist-band; she also travels across the sky with the aid of the *mauwulan rangga* (see Song 24, line 3), which she uses as walking sticks, and to which are attached feathered pendants. Identification of these red parakeet feathers with the sun's rays extends throughout the cycle. It symbolizes the concept of fertility, for the small red breast feathers are said to be like children, each individual feather being a 'child'; and they represent the warmth necessary for natural increase to take place.

539 Lines 26 and 27 of the same song (24) express this idea—'Rays like the parakeet-feathered string of our *rangga*! Feathered string like our child! Red glow of the sun. Rays warming our backs, like feathered-string! Like feathered *rangga*!' That is, the parakeet-feathered strings are attached to the *djuda rangga* pole and likened to (or identified with) the rays of the sun. The sun is said to 'carry the *djuda* (tree) *rangga* always, as if carrying a baby.' This reference expresses the underlying theme of the Djanggawul doctrine. The *rangga* object is regarded as a child, and is here called *wagu* (that is, *guliwona wagun*—*vide* text), which is the term used for sister's child (man speaking), or own child (woman speaking). That is to say, the Djanggawul Brother is calling the *rangga wagu*, the child of either Sister, Miralaidj or Bildjiwuraroiju; and they call the *rangga* by the same term. The *rangga* are carried in the *ngainmara* mat, symbolically the uterus of either Sister. They are the Djanggawul's children, by virtue of their presence in the wombs of the Sisters (that is, *rangga* kept in the *ngainmara*): *rangga* approximate children or people (see previous chapters). The *djuda rangga* are sacred poles, from which spring living trees: the association of the sun with these (that is, their feathered strings, likened to sun's rays) suggests how essential the sun is to the growth of trees and foliage. When the sun extends its rays to various sacred sites, lighting up the whole country of north-eastern Arnhem Land (see Song 24) it leaves its material substance at Elcho Island, crystallized in the form of red ochre (line 36). It extends as far as the western tribes on the boundary of the north-eastern-north-central Arnhem Land cultural bloc (lines 37–8), to country on the mainland behind Milingimbi, in the Barara *mala* ('Seagull' linguistic group) of the Bara *mala* ('North-west wind' clan), covering territory known as Burulmura. It reaches out, lighting up and warming all the places through which the Djanggawul are later to travel.

Comments on Part One of the Songs

Although most of the songs are self-explanatory, they need some additional comments and, as mentioned, should ideally be read in conjunction with the interlinear translations and accompanying notes. Throughout these songs there is a delightfully smooth rhythmic sequence. In Song 1 the Morning Star rises, guiding the Djanggawul on their journey, and providing an ever-present link with Bralgu Island, the place which they have left. They see a green backed turtle (Song 2) glistening in the rays of the Star; and various fish emerge from the sea as they paddle along (Song 3). Geese settle on the surface of the sea (Song 5) and are likened to the hordes of people to which the Djanggawul Sisters will later give birth, after reaching the mainland. Then a whale appears (Song 6), symbol of both the *ngainmara* mat and of the uterus. A catfish swims before the mouth of the whale (Song 7), and barely escapes being swallowed. Sea eggs float in great numbers on the surface (Song 8), and in Song 9 a green turtle appears to feed on them. Drift-wood (Song 10) floats by, with plovers swooping around it and sitting upon it (Song 11). The Djanggawul continue along the path of light sent by the Morning Star; and their paddling, like the movements of the various marine creatures, creates waves, spray and foam. Sponges appear floating (Song 13) and porpoises race behind the canoe (Song 14). A monstrous sawfish protrudes itself from the sea (Song 15), followed by a smaller one (Song 16), and by more porpoises (Song 17) with their young, spraying and splashing, making foam. Seagulls (Song 18) swoop to and fro, heralding their approach to the mainland, and lending impetus to their paddling. Again an immense sawfish appears (Song 19); it is viewed apprehensively by the Djanggawul, who fear that their canoe may be overturned. As they come near the mainland, they see floating masses of seaweed (Song 20). The last rays of the Morning Star continue to guide them, and now they are not far from Port Bradshaw (Song 21): its rays are driving away the darkness, bringing the day. Gradually the dawn appears, heralded by the morning pigeon (Song 22); but still there is darkness in the western sky. The cry of the pigeon is followed by the long drawn sound of a black bird (unidentified), Song 23; the Morning Star has almost set, drawn away by the Spirit people at Bralgu.

Then the red glow of the sun appears in the east (Song 24). Gradually its rays spread, and its disc rises above the horizon, casting reflections on the sea, illuminating the mainland, warming the Djanggawul and all the land. Flying foxes screech, in the sacred *djuda* trees on the mainland (Song 25). The Djanggawul discover that their *ngainmara* mat and *rangga* are sodden with sea water (Song 26); they throw some away as they enter Port Bradshaw, so

539 that to-day a reef lies there. Finally, we are told that they are worrying about the *rangga* and mat they have thrown into the sea (Song 27); they are exhausted after their long journey. They beach their canoe, and exclaim that at last they have reached their own land.

539 601 In Song 1 (*et. seq.*) Bralbral[1] and the Djanggawul call each other by the kinship term *waridj*; this is equivalent to *mari* or *gudara* (mother's mother, mother's mother's brother, mother's brother's son's wife, mother's mother's brother's son's daughter, wife's brother's wife, mother's mother's brother's son's son, etc.).[2] The term *waridj* is also commonly used at Yirrkalla (although not at Milingimbi) to signify a non-tabued 'mother-in-law' (mother's brother's wife), a relative who, if actually a wife's mother, would be *mugul rumarang*. Bralbral continually asks questions, intimating that he is less knowledgeable than the Djanggawul; and he has little or no handling of the *rangga*.

539 The Djanggawul and Bralbral rest on their oars when they are tired (for example Song 1, line 11), or when they fear a marine monster (Song 15, line 1) and must go carefully. As they paddle they undulate their buttocks, swaying their hips, as they stand and dip their oars from side to side.

Throughout this Part of the cycle references are made to the Morning Star, which provides a definite link with the island of Bralgu. It is said that as the Djanggawul look back, seeing the arc of light made by the Morning Star (for example Song 1, line 14), they are able to gauge the distance they have come, as well as the distance they have yet to go. The Star's disc is an 'eye' (line 16) which is said to 'swim' along through the water (line 17) and mount into the sky; it cannot rise too far, for it is held at the end of a string and must remain over Bralgu. The Morning Star is really a ball of seagull feathers attached to a long string, which in turn is tied to a paperbark sapling; there is not only one Star, but many (see latter part of Song 1). The Spirit people at Bralgu hold a ceremony each night and early morning. They dance with arms outstretched (line 19), and sing. As they pound their feet upon the ground, great clouds of dust rise upwards and bring the dusk which, as their dancing intensifies, turns to night. They then manipulate their long dancing pole (the paperbark sapling), with the long string to which feathered balls are attached (line 21). Each 'ball' represents a Morning Star, which the Bralgu Spirits send out towards a particular place on the mainland; it is one of these Morning Star 'balls' which guides the Djanggawul on their journey across the sea.

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[614] [1] Bralbral's name is used to designate a clan in the Wessel Islands—the Barabara or Ba'ralba'ral; the clan is also termed the *babaru* (father's clan) of this Ancestral Being.

[2] *Vide* texts and notes in proposed *Oceania* monograph.

Comments on Part One of the Songs

This subject is treated in some considerable detail in the secular 539 Bralgu Song Cycle, associated with the Morning Star ceremony (used during mortuary rituals, for Bralgu is the *dua* moiety home of the dead), when a long pole with string and feathered balls is used, and dancing imitates that of the Bralgu Spirits.

The paddling of the Djanggawul in their canoe, and the roar 539 of the sea, are re-enacted in the *dua nara* (see Chapter 1). A spear-thrower is dragged along the ground symbolizing the paddling. 796 The dancers cry *ei ei a:!* which is the sound of the sea, *a:!* being 535 the dull roar as the waves break. Then they lift up their legs, representing the rising waves which carry the canoe to their crests (line 24, Song 1) and then collapse downwards.

Lines 31–2, Song 1, refer to the *ngainmara* and to the *rangga*, 539 which are carried in the bottom of the canoe (*vide* Song 26, in reference to their being sodden). The *rangga* are stored within the mat (= uterus, with children within), and include the *mauwulan*, the yam stick, *djuda* and *djandu* poles. As the canoe rolls, they move about in the mat and rattle (line 32).

In Song 2 (lines 5, 6 and 7) the green-backed turtle is said to [825] possess a dilly bag: this may be seen from the mark of this bag on the turtle's under shell (its 'chest'); it holds its bag under one flipper, as a man holds his dilly bag when walking or dancing. The cuttlefish is also said to represent the bag of this turtle.

Many references are made throughout the songs, in this section of the cycle, to the Baijini folk (for example, Song 4, line 3)—that is, 'Paddling fast as we smell the Baijini from far away.' Several words used in the text are said to be directly associated with these alien people of the *jiritja* moiety: for example, *buragoimin*, 'sea smell' (line 3), which is also said to mean the smell of the smoke from the Baijini fires, at their settlement at Port Bradshaw. The Djanggawul see the smoke rising in the distance, and know that they must be drawing close to the mainland. The Two Sisters talk with their Brother. 'What do we see? What blocks (or obstructs) our passage? There are strangers in that place! They are blocking us, so we shall sing about them. But as soon as we reach Jelangbara (Port Bradshaw) we will move the Baijini: they can't stop, where we intend to have our sacred camp.' As they draw closer, they hear this word, *buragoimin*, drifting over to them, and for that reason it is included in the song.

Nevertheless, as mentioned in Chapter 3, there is a certain amount of rationalization here. The Djanggawul are frequently said to have been the first 'human' beings to land on the mainland; and yet this contradiction appears in the actual traditional texts, which infer that the *jiritja* Baijini have already settled at Port

Comments on Part One of the Songs

539 Bradshaw. This is a problem which cannot be solved, and we may only conjecture as to the true state of affairs. However, in the Song, the fires of the Baijini, their talking, and the sea smell from their fires, all incite the Djanggawul to paddle faster, in order to reach the mainland in the shortest possible time.

The reference to careful paddling (see Song 4, line 14) suggests the roughness of the sea, and the Djanggawul's anxiety lest they should inadvertently upset the canoe, and so lose the mat and sacred *rangga*. This care is particularly evident when a marine monster appears; but despite it they eventually get their *rangga* and mat wet, and decide to throw them away (Song 26).

The 'sea goose' mentioned in Song 5 is not really a goose, but merely resembles one: it has white chest feathers, the rest of its body being bluish grey tinged with red. Normally it lives among the swamps, but occasionally flies far out to sea. The introduction of such a bird into this section of the cycle suggests that the Djanggawul are nearing land. The geese come from Buragumi (line 2), a place comparatively close to Port Bradshaw, but occupied at that time by the Baijini. The word *mala* is used in reference to flocks of these birds, as they settle on the water before the paddling Djanggawul; *mala* may simply mean a 'crowd' or a 'lot', but here it refers to a 'clan', that is, a clan of geese. The word *madjara* (line 3), or *maidjarama* in Song 1, line 32, is used in reference not only to a flock or clan of geese, but also to sacred *rangga* emblems; another example of this is *jandaljandalju* (Song 5, line 3), or *jandaljandalwa* (Song 1, line 32), a term which refers collectively to the emblems. This usage is fairly common in the songs, when 'inside' terms refer to different things and must be explained in context. On the other hand, such words with multiple meanings are used symbolically, like (for example) the word *ngainmara*, a mat, bag, uterus, or whale. The flocks of geese suggest the idea of plenty and fertility: 'They are like the many people we shall soon put on the mainland' (say the Djanggawul). *Vide* line 5, 'Flocks of birds, like hordes of people, people whom we shall put on the mainland.'

[192] The word *bongimbongim* (*bungjnbungjn*), Song 5, line 4, although referring to the *mala* of these sea birds, is to-day used to classify all the Aborigines from the Cape Stewart region, a little west of Milingimbi, across to Darwin: that is, people who do not belong to the north-eastern Arnhem Land cultural bloc. In line 4 (*vide* original text) the word *ereingu* (or *jereingu*) is used, and translated as 'half the people in here', referring to the people who are to be removed from the Sisters' uteri and left at various places. The same theme is extended in line 5; this refers to a large group of people towards Arnhem Bay, and to the Gurwia *mala*, a group

who were south-west of Yirrkalla in the bush. All, however, are symbolized in the flocks of geese seen by the Djanggawul. The symbolism is extended in line 9: 'Grey crested birds . . . emerging from the mouth of the *ngainmara* mat!' that is, like people issuing from the Sisters' uteri, the mat.

In Song 6 we are told of the whale which intercepts the paddling of the Djanggawul, and causes large waves which threaten to overturn the canoe; it is called by the term *ngainmara*, mat or uterus. Its gaping mouth, *dalwuldalwul* (also *wagulwagul*), is equivalent to *dalwuddalwu* (Song 1, line 31), the 'mouth' of the *ngainmara*, conversely vulva or vagina. The Djanggawul observe it in the sea—' ' . . . Our *ngainmara* mat, swimming under the water!' (Song 6, line 5); that is, it is like the *ngainmara* they carry in the canoe. Translators comment, 'there is the whale in the sea; it is really the mat. When the Djanggawul Sisters give birth to female children (*vide* Myth, Chapter 2), these are put under the mat, or into the belly of the whale (through the *dalwuldalwul*).' In line 10 reference is made to the Djanggawul's taking some baskets (= mats), and leaving others in the sea to form whales. The Djanggawul and Bralbral are talking: 'Some baskets we can take with us,' they say, 'and some we can leave in the sea water, like the *ngainmara* whale.' That is to say, the Djanggawul leave the whale 'basket' (as the mat is called) in the sea, and take the 'ordinary' *ngainmara* with them (line 11).

In Song 7 a catfish comes to the surface and 'plays' before the gaping mouth of the whale (line 3). The fish is like a *rangga* about to be put inside the *ngainmara*, or a penis entering a vagina (gaping mouth). The 'whiskers' of the whale touch the fish (lines 1 and 6); they are like the pandanus fringe of the *ngainmara* mat (= pubic hairs of the Sisters). These whiskers are referred to by the same word as that used for the greyish feathers of the sea goose (Song 5), inferring that they also are greyish in colour.

In Song 8, the Djanggawul observe sea eggs for the first time; they are 'strangers' (line 3) from Bralgu, having drifted from there to the mainland. In line 10 (*et passim*), the Djanggawul are said to have grown grey: 'too long they sat down at Bralgu, collecting a lot of *rangga* emblems; and so they became grey.' What is suggested, however, is not so much the greyness of age, as the whiteness of the sea water and foam which has splashed up from their paddling and stained their hair. They are, moreover, stained with sea and foam markings all over their bodies, and these form patterns which will afterwards be used as clan designs.

In Song 9 a turtle emerges to the surface, for it smells the sea eggs; its shell reflects the rays of the Morning Star (line 9).

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539 In Song 10 drift-wood appears floating near the canoe. Sometimes this comprises merely odd pieces of tree limbs or trunks, but occasionally planks (from wrecks and so on) wash down to north-eastern Arnhem Land from Cape York, the Torres Straits, New Guinea and even, possibly, from the East Indies. Carved or painted planks were sometimes used as *rangga* emblems by the Arnhem Landers. The drift-wood speaks (there is a tendency to personalize, in this way, various birds, animals and objects), 'I leave the foam on my body'; (line 10) that is, foam accumulates on it, forming patterns that resemble totemic designs.

Black birds, plovers, hover around the drifting timber (Song 11); their cry echoes across to the rising clouds. This cry is said to be a 'message' for the Djanggawul (line 9), telling them that they are not far from Port Bradshaw. Reference is also made to 'message clouds', that bend down from the main mass. In Song 13, line 3, we read that the Djanggawul scratch themselves. The 'singing' name of the sponge means 'scratching', for as the Djanggawul rest on their paddles the Brother leans forward and picks one up; idly he squeezes it, then throws it back into the sea. Later he rubs his hands on his thighs, but some unidentified substance from the sponge sets up an irritation on his skin, causing the Brother to scratch. Another 'singing' name for the sponge means 'children playing', suggesting that children play with these dry sponges when they are washed up on to the beaches. In Song 14, line 12, we are again told how the foam from the pounding surf puts patterns on the shoulders and bodies of the Djanggawul, to be used later by them as clan and linguistic group designs.

The (unidentified) sawfish mentioned in Song 15 is also said to be a 'long nosed small black whale'; it is called *deimiri*, and from native drawings appears to be a species of sawfish. Many stories are told of its ferocity, of how it rises erect from the water and falls upon a canoe, breaking it up; alternatively, it may swallow the canoe and its contents completely. Smaller sawfish (Song 16) also appear, fighting smaller fish. The Djanggawul paddle very carefully, for the movement of all these fish causes waves and splashing, making the sea rough. Song 17 brings the porpoise into the picture which is gradually built up by these songs. Reference is made (line 5) to the young porpoises, who are said to have been born in the fresh-water creeks at the island of Bralgu. Aborigines say that the water which they spurt out, as they race behind a canoe or play in the sea, goes in through their mouths and out through the aperture in the back of their heads, 'in much the same way as a human being urinates'.

In Song 18 a seagull swoops towards the oncoming canoe of the Djanggawul; it gives 'power' to their paddling, and enables them to reach the mainland quickly (line 3). It is said that 'when you are tired from too much paddling (as the Djanggawul were), this gull circles around the canoe, and as you see it, it gives you renewed energy'. The country about Yirrkalla is totemically associated with this bird, from whose cry the Riradjingu linguistic group derives its name. Line 7 refers to the fact that the female gull lays its eggs at the onset of the wet season; thus it '. . . cries out as it sees the dark rain clouds rising', '. . . Cries out at the time of the wet season: it thinks of nesting' (line 8). A popular nesting place for seagulls is at Bremer Island (line 9), which may be seen from Yirrkalla. 539

Song 19 introduces us to the ferocious *marabinjin* sawfish, so fierce that it attacks any other fish, and any canoe; and there are tales of its even having capsized Macassan craft in the old days. This fish whips up the water (line 5), making it very dangerous for the Djanggawul. In its body it carries a 'poison bag' (lines 11 and 12), from which, when it is 'angry', poison is transmitted to the barbs or teeth of its saw. The fish itself speaks in the song, boasting that it makes the sea rough, and that no canoe may go near where it swims (line 13). The Djanggawul paddle in great haste, trying to leave it far behind.

Song 21 includes all the main elements in Songs 1, 4 and 12; it is the final song in which the Morning Star supplies the dominant theme. We are told again how, sent by the Bralgu Spirits, it has guided the Djanggawul on their journey to Arnhem Land; but now it is gradually sinking, heralding the dawn (lines 14, 15 and 16): 'The Morning Star shines, bringing the dawn . . . putting an end to the night . . . Close to us, ending the darkness, bringing the dawn . . .' In line 17 the Morning Star is said to shine like the *mauwulan rangga* pole, decorated with red breast feathers from the parakeet; this suggests (see Song 24) that the Star is possessed of some of the sun's substance. However, the feathered 'ball' which is the Star is made solely of white birds' down: the feathered jungle string to which it is fastened is intertwined with red parakeet feathers. Conversely, the feathered parakeet pendants attached to the *mauwulan rangga* (and also to other *dua* moiety *rangga*) have white down terminals; the above line refers to this feature.

Before the dawn, while the Morning Star is sinking (drawn back to Bralgu by the Spirits), comes the sound of the morning pigeon (Song 22). 'Darkness goes, with its cry!' (line 3), which is heard in '. . . the calmness of dawn . . .' (line 6). This pigeon is said to be a yellow or brown swamp bird, of the jiritja moiety. Reference is made to its teaching its young to utter the same cry (lines 8, 13 and 14), and its peculiar whistle is said to be from 'twisting its tongue'. The pigeons' nests are in the 'arm-band' bushes on the mainland, which provide pliable cane for the manufacture of armlets like those worn by the Djanggawul (*vide* Song 26, line 6). Such nests are noted for their inner smoothness (Song 22, line 9), and the alternative term used for them is *dagawal* or *dagu*, meaning hole or vagina. The birds[1] nesting within it are like *rangga* within the *ngainmara*, symbolically representing children in the uterus (here, again, we have the predominating theme of the cycle). The bird is described by the term *dulboingu*, referring to the Gumaidj *jiritja* linguistic group at Caledon Bay; and its cry 'sounds like' the speech of the Madarlpa linguistic group, as well as like that of the Dalwongu.

Following the pigeon are unidentified black birds of the *dua* moiety (Song 23); these live in the jungles adjacent to the sea coast, and fly out to sea. The Djanggawul have now almost reached Port Bradshaw. This bird, too, cried out as it '. . . saw the darkness clearing' (line 5). Its young are mentioned (line 9), and its nests in the 'coffee' trees (line 14); the word referring to this tree also refers to the sacred *djuda rangga* emblem. Although no *djuda* have as yet been 'planted' on the mainland, it is implied that they will be (for example, in Song 25, line 6, in reference to the flying fox).

Song 24 brings us to the sun, which gradually emerges from its watery home below the sea (lines 6, 9, 11). (*Vide* Chapter 2, where reference is made to the sun.) It beats on the backs of the paddling Djanggawul, as they travel westwards; the term *bialdun* means 'burns their backs'. The importance of the ideas brought out in this song have already been noted, and need not be reiterated. The sun's rays are 'caught' or symbolized in the beautiful red breast feathers of the parakeet birds, and the long strings or pendants of these feathers are themselves the very essence of the sun, of its warmth and fructifying qualities; this is a feature that appears throughout the cycle. As the sun beats down on their backs, the Djanggawul sweat (line 13) from the unaccustomed warmth, accentuated by their vigorous paddling. The word used for 'sweat', *ngeingeijun*, also refers to grass dried up by the hot sun: that is, all the moisture is drawn out, and the inner part or body becomes dry. So strong is the glare from the sun that the Djanggawul are obliged to close their eyes (line 14). The Morning Star has disappeared; the cry of the morning pigeon or of the black bird is heard no longer. The mainland is clearly seen, and their destination is in sight.

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[1] The bird calls its nestlings *wagu*, a term used by a mother when addressing her children, or by a man to his sister's children.

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Song 25 suggests that the Djanggawul are close to the mainland: 539
the flying foxes are crying from their trees, which are said to be *djuda rangga* (lines 6, 7 and 8). In Song 26 the travellers discover that the *rangga* and mat(s) they have carried in their canoe have become sodden with salt water and spray. Bralbral asks the Djanggawul what they intend to do with the wet *rangga*, tied up in the basket (mat)—line 8, they decide to throw the basket away with the *rangga* inside. On second thoughts, the Djanggawul Brother says, 'No! We will have a look inside first, before they sink down into the sea.' The Two Sisters, however, object. 'No, you are not going to open (or untie) it. You can just throw it into the sea, because it has all got wet.' Since the Sisters are the real custodians of the sacred *rangga*, the decision rests with them; the Djanggawul Brother and his companion Bralbral can do nothing. They therefore throw the *rangga* over the side of their canoe, so that they '. . . sink down, making a noise as the sea covers them' (line 13). Some *rangga*, however, have been kept. It is not clear whether the basket (or mat) containing the *rangga* is thrown overboard, or whether the *rangga* are removed and then thrown out of the canoe. A native drawing (*vide* original text and notes) shows the *rangga* being removed from the *ngainmara*. Not only are the *rangga* wet, but their decorations, like the fibre of the mat, are stained with spray and foam. One part of the original text suggests that the mat is first undone (its 'mouth' opened), and then turned upside down so that the *rangga* fall out one by one into the water; finally, the mat itself is 'put into the water'. The *rangga* make a reef outside the entrance to Port Bradshaw, while the mat turns into a whale (*vide* Song 6). The text, however, indicates rather that the 'mouth' or aperture of the mat was not undone, and all the *rangga* were just dumped overboard. As they are thrown into the sea, the Djanggawul call the sacred invocations (line 12); see Chapter 1.

In the last song (27) of this section, we are told that the Brother and Bralbral regret having thrown away the *rangga* and mat without first looking at them. 'I am worrying (says the Djanggawul Brother) about the *rangga*. (Why didn't we open the mat?)'—line 5. They attribute their carelessness to their being tired—'I am just tired! That was why *waridj*, we threw away the sacred *rangga* and mat.'—line 6. They are very weary, for they have travelled such a long way; and at last they have reached Port Bradshaw. 'That is our country!' (line 9) they exclaim, as they beach their canoe, 'We have arrived, oh *Waridj*!' (line 10). The Djanggawul step on to the shore, and
insert their *mauwulan rangga* into the ground; at its withdrawal water 539
gushes forth, leaving a permanent spring. 538

In commenting on these songs, we have mentioned only the 533

539 538 533 outstanding details. Many interesting features are revealed in the phonetic texts, and these are discussed elsewhere. We can see, however, how well controlled is the theme, how ideas follow in sequence, and how behind all the various incidents a definite structure or pattern is evolved and retained. Certain points are constantly reiterated throughout most of this section. This is a common practice in most song cycles of north-eastern and north-central Arnhem Land, where it is apparently felt that repetition gives background and atmosphere to the separate songs. The paddling, the Morning Star, the roar of the sea with its spray and foam, appear again and again. There is a feeling of movement and action which lends veracity to the saga; the eternal movement of the sea, its constant roar, and ever undulating waves, are said to have been caused not only by the paddling of the Djanggawul, but by the marine creatures which they meet on their journey. Wherever possible too, the underlying pattern of the Djanggawul ideology is linked to various incidents and themes: the flocks of birds and nests, for instance; the rolling *rangga* in the mat, rattling with the movement of the canoe; the whale *ngainmara*; the *rangga* and feathered string, and the rays from the sun; the throwing overboard of the *rangga* and mat, and so on; all intrude themselves to express the symbolic significance of the Djanggawul's journey.

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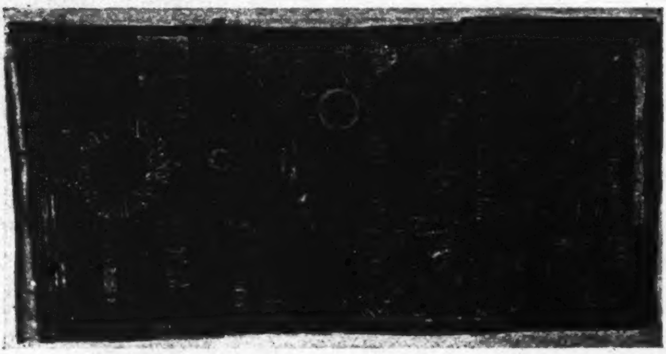

11. The Djanggawul Beings on arrival at Jelangbara, holding *rangga* emblems.

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12. A ceremonial leader (Manimbar) represents the Djanggawul Brother as he tastes water on arriving at Port Bradshaw.

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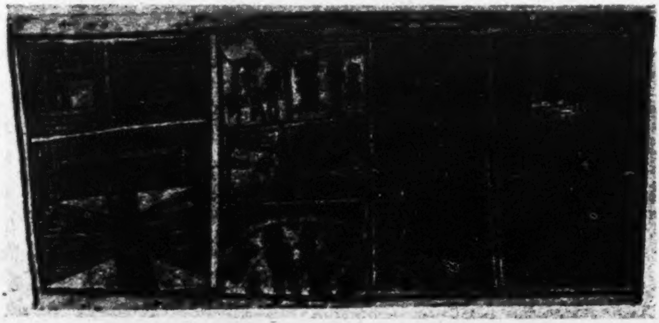
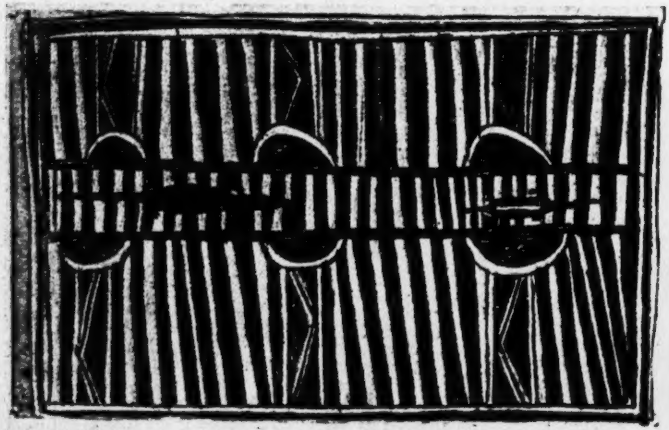


13. Sacred sites at Port Bradshaw; showing *rangga* folk left by the Djanggawul.



14. The sacred goanna at the Place of the Mauwulan.

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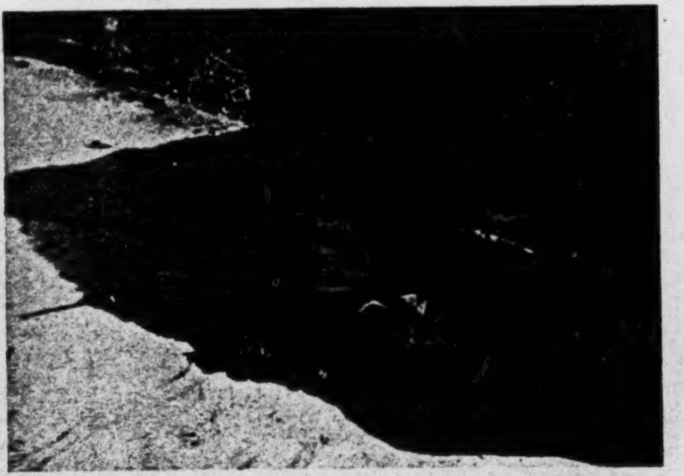
15. Calling invocations before the sacred shade.



16. The Goanna emblem emerges from the shade.

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17. Various sacred shades, with the Djanggawul.

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18. *Nara* postulants representing male and female Goanna.

[p. 92(D)]

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19. The Djanggawul Goanna emerges from the shade.

20. Postulants in stylized attitudes, with Goanna Tail emblem.

[p. 92 (E)]

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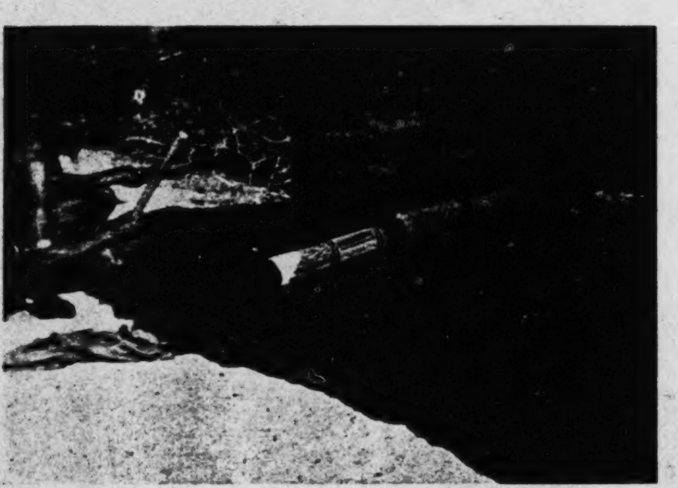
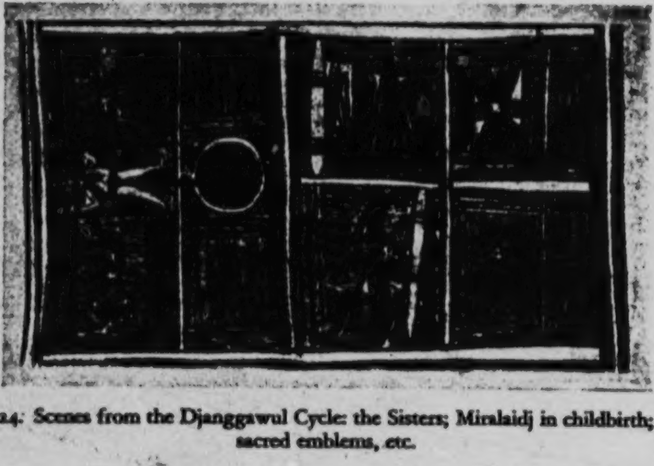
21. Clapping sticks and blowing the sacred Julunggul drone pipe, above the posturing sacred Goanna.



22. The Julunggul Python emerges from the sacred shade: postulants lie on their backs, with the emblem resting upon them.

23. The Djanggawul Beings: the Brother removes *rangga* folk from his Sisters.



24. Scenes from the Djanggawul Cycle: the Sisters; Miralaidj in childbirth; sacred emblems, etc.

[p. 92(G)]

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25. Postulants with Goanna Tail *rangga*.

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26. Removal of *rangga* from the *jiritja* moiety shade.

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27. Dancing with the *jiritja* moiety *rangga.*

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28. Neophytes await the showing of the Djanggawul emblems.

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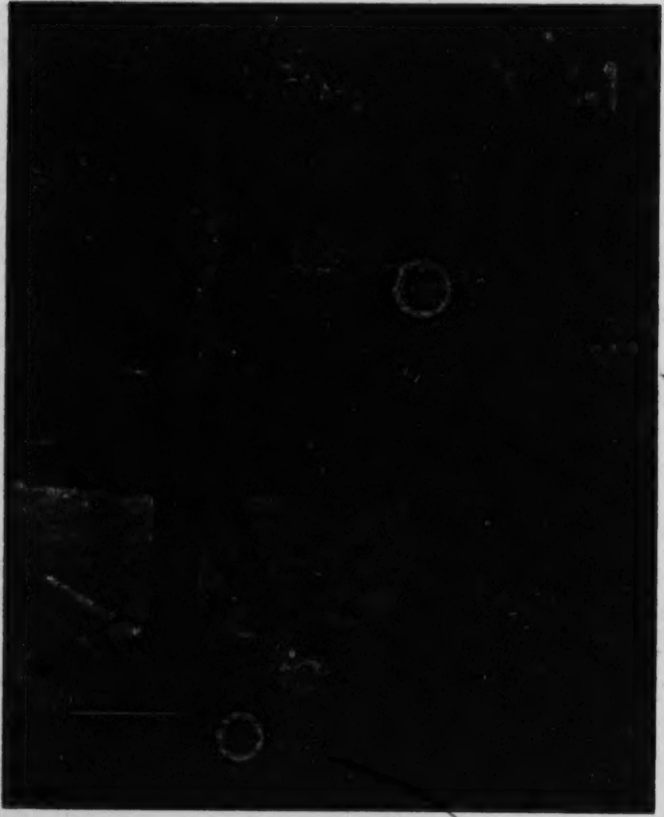

29. Meditation before the sacred Goanna Tail *rangga*.

[p. 92(J)]

Chapter Twenty-five

EPILOGUE

121 113 WE are now in a position to summarize and discuss the contents of the Djanggawul epic, as described in the Yirrkalla version. To facilitate this, a chapter of detailed comments has been added to each part, or group of songs. These separate chapters have reviewed briefly the significance and symbolic intent of each song; they have indicated, too, the various threads running through all the parts, and their interrelated themes. We have thus already glimpsed the cycle as an integrated whole, and noted the fundamental elements which have emerged. It remains, now, for us to draw broad conclusions on this basis. Final conclusions must, however, rest on our analysis of the Milingimbi version of this same cycle. That version is complementary to the one reviewed here, and although its basic themes are similar, and its fundamental intent is the same, it does contain a number of additional features. These differences, insignificant as they may seem, must be taken into account in making our final summary of the Djanggawul cult in north-central and north-eastern Arnhem Land.

182 113 533 Reading through the mythology and songs of the Djanggawul cult, we can perhaps begin to appreciate something of the care and thought which have gone into their construction, in the form in which we see them to-day. Through them it is possible for aliens such as ourselves to understand in some degree the fundamental issues involved in one Aboriginal religious cult. Moreover, it is only through the medium of such material, particularly in the form of interlinear translations, that we may attain more than a superficial understanding of Aboriginal thought and behaviour. These

songs express what may be described as the spiritual quality of 182 this particular Aboriginal society. They are essentially traditional, 773 and have developed within the society as the result of group rather than of conscious or acknowledged individual effort. The individual 533 is thus subordinated to the social conscience, in that he becomes the instrument through which they are transmitted, and through which they continue to live. The fact that he may add something to them in the course of transmission is not, here, a significant factor in this process: for if their inherent 'power', or their sacred aura, is to remain, they must retain what is felt to be their original structure in recognizable form. In this lies their essential value as documents of social thought and religious belief. Being predominantly traditional, they stem from the past; and because the concept of the 'Eternal Dreaming' is a living reality in Aboriginal life, these songs continue to retain at least the main ingredients (or what people themselves regard as the main ingredients) of their original content. Moreover, their oral transmission has been associated with special rhythms and ritual postures, and with accompanying dances, providing means of expression for the sacred thought and emotion not merely of one but indeed of many generations of Aborigines.

The Djanggawul songs and mythology comprise a body of 773 knowledge which is not restricted, in the sense of being available to only one section of the community, but is shared by all adults 533 and (to a much lesser extent) children. For practical purposes, a 562 distinction is made between, on the one hand, the executive 184 authority wielded by the men, and on the other, the more submissive 778 participation of the women. Women know the content and rhythms of the songs, but 'officially' they are not supposed to know the ritual or the sacred invocations, or to see the *rangga* emblems. Generally speaking, however, they do know more about these than would be suspected from conversations with men alone. A number of women have described to my wife, in confidence, various features of the rituals performed exclusively and 'secretly' by men. They have described the *rangga* emblems, and told her many of the sacred terms used in invoking. An explanation of this lies in the Aborigines' concept of sacredness, which is not restricted to the confines of the ceremonial ground. It is, on the contrary, widely diffused throughout the society, and appears to permeate every institution and activity of the people. Women, as we have 773 seen, by virtue of their childbearing ability as symbolized by the 533 womb, possess a special sacred quality peculiar to themselves, in 562 which men may not share. However important man may be— 778 and the indispensable part he plays in conception receives much attention in the Djanggawul epic—woman has the more spectacular

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562 rôle, and the miracle of childbirth is hers alone. Upon that simple
778 but fundamental thesis much of this traditional epic is based.

Woman's participation in the *dua nara* is thus both logical and necessary. Each sex, however, has its own part to play; and the Djanggawul cycle has indicated not only the physical but also the culturally defined ritual differences between men and women.

In this volume, when describing the beliefs and practices associated
794 with the Djanggawul cycle and the performance of *nara* ritual, we
796 have purposely employed the term cult. This does not mean,
however, that it is controlled or shared by a select group, the
184 acceptance of members within the order being determined by
totemic, clan or linguistic group affinities, by status, prestige or economic position. This is not so. The Djanggawul cult is one of a number existing contemporaneously in this region, each having its own mythology and associated ceremonies. All these cults are in some degree interrelated, and all male members of the society are eligible as active participants. Boys and young men pass automatically through the age-grading ceremonies of the *djunggawon*, *kunapipi* and *ngurlmag*. In addition to these, there are certain revelatory rituals, which are not initiatory. The extent of a man's active
794 participation in the latter, and his eligibility for leadership, depend
796 upon several factors—for example, on his moiety and kinship
554 affiliations, and on whether or not the cult's mythology and ritual
belong to his particular linguistic group or clan, and to his father's
184 family. Such factors, however, never operate to debar him altogether,
and in many cases his relationship to the cult through his mother's
616 family may have a compensatory effect. The same conditions apply
in the case of the major religious cults, the *dua* and *jiritja* moiety *nara*. All men may be accepted as initiands to the *nara* ceremonies, and all may subsequently become neophytes; but the measure of their active participation and leadership depends on the factors mentioned above. Only a *dua* moiety man, belonging to the most powerful *dua* linguistic group and clan, can rise to ceremonial headmanship in the *dua nara*; and here, too, the principle of descent may operate. The writer's main informants in recording and discussing the Djanggawul songs, mythology and so on were *dua* headmen, assisted by other men who were correspondingly 'graded' in the ritual sphere.

533 Comparison of the myth (Chapter 2) with the Songs reveals certain
773 inconsistencies. These may perhaps stem from the fact that the myth is an over-all sketch of the Djanggawul's journey and adventures; it allows rather more latitude and scope to individual narrators, and does not purport to describe various incidents in any great detail. On the whole, it does agree basically with the Songs; but

whereas the latter terminate abruptly at Arnhem Bay, the myth 533
draws to its anticipated conclusion somewhere beyond Milingimbi. 113
Presentation of the Milingimbi version will throw some light on this question of the myth in its relation to the songs: for, as mentioned earlier, it not only repeats much of what has been set out here, but continues on to the Balbanara district, on the mainland south-west of Milingimbi. Even so, some of the place names mentioned in the myth are omitted from the Songs, and some of the incidents said to have taken place are not correlated. For example, we are told in the myth that the Sisters' clitorises were first cut at Dambala(nguru), whereas in the Songs this is done at Marabai. The two places are, however, close together; the most important point is that in both instances the cutting occurs after the Sisters have lost their sacred basket and *rangga*. Several other details, such as the piercing of the Sisters' hands by the *gabila* mangrove 'nail' fish, are not treated in the Songs; the latter incident, however, took place when the *rangga* fish traps were being erected (Part Four), so that this seems to be a matter of omission rather than of contradiction. Other features, like the *jiritja* moiety water blocking the Djanggawul at Waruwi, the flying foxes at Maiilwi, the meeting with Buralindjingu, and the Djanggawul's sojourn on Galiwinggo Island, are contained in the Milingimbi version. In the Songs, no mention is made of the killing of Miralaidj by sorcery, and of her miraculous reappearance; possibly this was not a traditional element, and was inserted without sacred sanction.

Where actual discrepancies are found between myth and Songs, it is difficult to find a satisfactory explanation. It is perhaps reasonable to suggest, as above, that the traditional songs are less subject to apparent alteration, while the myth depends on individual telling without the operation of the same social controls, and the story-teller is not bound to adhere rigidly to the main theme. Nevertheless, the myth provides a 'setting' for the Songs, and helps us to glimpse the whole in perspective even if not in considerable detail; on the other hand, it does not reveal the symbolic significance of the cycle in the same clear fashion as the Songs.

The Songs are presented here in the way in which they are sung 533
The original sequence, word order, and structure are retained 128
(except that when sung rapidly there is some slurring and abbreviation of words, not manifested in slower singing). The only thing lacking is the accompanying music; for they are, as mentioned, sung in conjunction with ritual and dancing. When the anthropologist has knowledgeable and competent informants, is acquainted with the language and with the ritual, and records the words as they are sung, the margin of possible error is considerably

533 minimized. Moreover, the constant repetition, which serves to 128 impress on listeners the main features of the Songs, has a similar effect upon the singers themselves. An important device where transmission is entirely oral, with no visual aids except the sacred objects employed in the rituals, it also helps to ensure that the essential outline of the Songs is handed on from one generation to another. With the myth, however, it is rather a different matter. 773 The myth is never narrated consecutively as a story, and there is 128 no accompanying check of song and ritual. It is told in fragments, so to speak, to explain certain physiographical features, elements of social behaviour, or ritual activities; or brief extracts from it may be cited in the course of relevant discussion. The myth as related in this volume is composite, and represents a synthesis of several versions.

773 In some points, the myth as told by women does not conform to that told by men. Essentially, however, all the versions are in 562 agreement. Women, too, stress the long penis of the Brother and clitorises of the Sisters; the stealing of the basket and *rangga*, and leadership of the *nara* rituals; the association with the sun and with the *lindaridj* parakeet; and the sacredness of menstrual and afterbirth blood. They are inclined to emphasize the powers of the Two Sisters at the expense of the Brother, and to credit them with creating and leaving the most important animal and vegetable foods for the benefit of the Aborigines who were to follow them. The important childbearing rôle of the Djanggawul Sisters, setting the pattern which women follow to-day, is said to have been introduced by themselves. Before this, among the spirit people inhabiting the land, women would select babies from the many to be found sitting among the foliage of the cycad palms, and take them back to camp to be breast-fed by the men. Women, it is said (with a certain amount of rationalization), were too busy with sacred ritual to attend to the bearing and rearing of children. The Djanggawul, however, started the practice of child-bearing as it is now known, and were the True Mothers of the Aboriginal race in this region.

539 Let us turn now to a review of the Song Cycle as it is presented here.

533 In Part One the Djanggawul leave Bralgu, the island of Spirits, to which they had come from somewhere farther across the sea. The Songs emphasize the fact that this was the place from which they voyaged to the Australian mainland. The Morning Star, too, was sent from Bralgu, and from there rose the sun, the influence of which is felt throughout the cycle: for, as mentioned in Chapters 1 to 3, the Djanggawul Sisters

are associated with the sun, and the rays of sunlight in concrete and tangible form are the red breast feathers of the parakeet, and the feathered *rangga* strings.

The main theme of this part (One) is the Djanggawul's journey through the rough sea, guided by the rays from the Morning Star which shine upon the water. On the journey they see many fish, and marine animals; the movement of these, together with the Djanggawul's paddling, creates waves and causes the sea to grow rough. Foam sprays over the canoe, staining their bodies and hair, and the *rangga* emblems stored away in the *ngainmara*. A whale appears and is likened to the *ngainmara* mat; and, later, *rangga* emblems and *ngainmara*, thought to have been irrevocably damaged by moisture, are tossed overboard. The Morning Star gives way to the glow of early morning as the Djanggawul near the mainland. Various birds herald the coming dawn; the warming rays of the sun appear, and the Djanggawul enter Port Bradshaw harbour.

This part sets the pattern for the rest of the cycle, by introducing different elements which are developed and co-ordinated as the Songs proceed. The movement of the sea, with the incoming and the ebbing tides, is an integral feature, and is associated with the rising and flooding of fresh-water wells. The foam caused by such movements is also symbolically important, and is constantly mentioned in connexion with the *rangga* and feathered strings. In fact, the fluctuations of the tides, and the rising well-waters flooding the land, come to serve as a dominant theme. It is this section of the cycle which sponsors much of the basic *nara* ritual, as set out in Parts Eight, Nine and Ten.

In Part Two the Djanggawul arrive at Jelangbara, Port Bradshaw, and make wells by plunging into the ground the point of their sacred *mauwulan* pole. They also 'plant' trees, which spring from their *djuda rangga*; and various birds and reptiles become totemic through association with them. Here, too, the parakeet is mentioned for the first time. Its red (or deep orange) breast feathers reflect the rays of the setting sun, and are looked upon as being part of the sun itself; this attitude is particularly important, in view of the significance of the parakeet-feathered strings used on the *rangga* and sacred baskets or dilly bags. As these birds sit in the trees which have grown from the *djuda*, they ruffle and dry their feathers in the warmth and glow of the sun, just as the Djanggawul dry the feathered strings which were moistened by sea spray and foam.

The Djanggawul construct a *nara* shade, hanging from it sacred baskets, and make a mound at one side of the clearing used as a dancing ground. This represents the sacred sandhill at the Place of the Mauwulan, where the *djanda rangga* goanna appeared, and left his tracks. (In memory of this occasion, and because that sandhill was particularly sacred, a small symbolic 'sandhill' of earth is always made at the *nara* ground.) The goanna then jumps into the fresh-water well, and the water rises

539 (just as the various sea creatures brought about the movement of the
sea and its tides). An alien element is superimposed here, as the Djangga-
533 wul come in contact with the Baijini folk. This element, although important in many ways, is not co-ordinated with the rest of the cycle, and can thus be accorded only passing reference. The Baijini cycle itself will be presented and discussed later; it is associated with the Macassan cycle, since the Aborigines regard the Baijini folk as aliens, physically and culturally distinct from themselves.

In Part Three the Djanggawul leave Port Bradshaw, and search for a place at which to construct a *nara* shade. As they travel along they 'make country', plant *djuda* trees, plunge their *mauwulan* into the ground so that wells gush forth, and arrange feathered strings which grow into yam creepers and foliage. Billowing white clouds beckon the Djanggawul onwards. Geese, which are in reality *rangga*, are placed in the well, and the water bubbles up; these geese symbolize the *rangga* children who will later emerge from the Sisters. Various fish are caught and declared sacred, and come into 'Dreaming'. Water goanna, too, are put into the well. In consequence of all this the water surges up and overflows, flooding the countryside. At last the *nara* shade is erected, and the foam-splashed *rangga* emblems are removed from the *ngainmara* and dried in the sun.

Part Four sees the Djanggawul reaching Arnhem Bay. Here more *djuda* are planted, and upon them parakeets perch crying. One of the Sisters feels unwell, and cannot walk quickly. She is pregnant; her uterus is full of people. A place is prepared, and the people are removed from her. Fish traps, with *rangga* posts, are arranged at Wagulwagul, the Place of the Mat. The well water continues to rise and spreads across the country, bringing fish which are caught in the trap. Later, the Djanggawul sit in their shade and decorate the *rangga*.

Part Five refers, symbolically, to the removal of the *rangga* folk from the Sisters. As the Djanggawul walk along, they reach a tidal creek in which a whale is stranded; this is the *ngainmara* mat, and refers back to the whale mentioned in Part One. Later on a shade is constructed, and a fire kindled to provide warmth for the Sisters during the process of childbirth. Mangrove shells and *rangga* are removed from the *ngainmara*, and the fringe of the mat or basket is cut (an act of *nara* ritual significance). The ground at the sacred shade is specially laid out, with the symbolic sandhill of the Place of the Mauwulan to one side (*vide* Part Two). More *djuda* are placed in the well, and the water rises; the parakeets, perched on the *djuda*, dry their feathers in the glow of the setting sun and finally disappear.

Part Six continues the theme which made its appearance in the preceding part. Most of the Songs here relate symbolically to the removal of the people from the *ngainmara*-womb. Feathered strings are spread out on the ground, leading or pointing to various places associated with the Djanggawul, and representing umbilical cords. More people are removed from the Sisters, and the male children are likened to circumcision novices. The cutting of the umbilical cord signifies the cutting of the foreskin. In both cases there is a severance from the Mother, and the significant point made here is that circumcision is ritually a rebirth. Children are placed in the sacred shade to play in the sun's rays, and a comparison is drawn here with the parakeets drying themselves in the sun. In this part, too, a division between the sexes is noted for the first time (a theme elaborated in Part Ten); male children are removed first, and left unprotected in the coarse grass, while female children are taken out later and are protected by the *ngainmara* mat.

Part Seven continues with the removal of *rangga* folk. More *djuda* and other *rangga* are put into the sacred well, and the water rises and floods. A *nara* shade is built; and more *rangga* are hidden in the well, which is equated with the *ngainmara* or womb.

Part Eight is principally concerned with the Djanggawul Sisters' loss of the sacred basket and *rangga* emblems. They are stolen by the Brother and his *galibingu* companions (circumcision novices: *vide* Part Six), who take over the *nara* ritual. The Two Sisters have hung their basket, or dilly bag, from a tree in their shade above a fire which they have prepared, and have gone out to collect mussels. *Rangga* folk are again removed, and *djuda* planted. Warned by a bird, the Sisters return to find their basket and *rangga* gone. They discover that the men have taken it, and hear the ritual in progress. In this way, the women come to lose their active control of the *nara*. Nevertheless, although deprived of this function, they retain absolute authority over the *ngainmara*, the *djuda* and other *rangga*. They do not mind surrendering their sacred objects to the men, for they have really lost nothing.

This section is probably the most spectacular in the whole cycle and, to the Aborigines, the most important: for it not only explains the monopoly which the men hold to-day in so far as executive control of the *nara* is concerned, but also emphasizes the economic division of labour between the sexes (that is, the Sisters are now to grind cycad nuts for 'bread').

Immediately after this, the Djanggawul Brother shortens his penis, a sign of 'emancipation', representing symbolically the severance of the umbilical cord, this in turn being identified with circumcision (*vide* Part Six). Then comes the cutting of each Sister's elongated clitoris; this action symbolizes the severing of the umbilical cord which links the *rangga* children with the mother, the loss of their *rangga* and basket and of their symbolic penes, and their acceptance of their new status (upon losing their former executive powers for controlling the *nara* ritual). When the cutting is completed, more *rangga* folk are taken from the

539 *ngainmara*; and this part concludes with the stolen sacred basket hanging from the men's *nara* shade.

533 As Part Nine opens, the Djanggawul are again continuing on their way, 'making country'. The Sisters are still pregnant. One lies in the sacred *nara* shade (although they have lost their basket and *rangga* they have not, apparently, been debarred from the *nara* shade or ground); her clitoris is again shortened, and more people are put out. The Djanggawul Brother attempts to have coitus with the younger Sister, Miralaidj, but his penis is 'blocked' by an arm-band lodged in her vagina. The cut clitoris is healed in the warmth of the sun; the blood which flows from it, and the red walls beyond the labia majora, are symbolic of the red rays of the setting sun, and of the red breast feathers of the parakeet. Miralaidj is then covered by the *ngainmara*, to signify her sacredness. *Rangga* folk dance from the Sisters' wombs into the *nara* shade. Again the Brother attempts to have coitus with Miralaidj; his *rangga* penis is erected, and in copulating he breaks the arm-band inside her vagina. Blood flows, and numbers of *rangga* people emerge. Bildjiwuraroiju aids her younger Sister by releasing, through abdominal pressure, a clot of blood which eventually liquefies and flows. Again Miralaidj is placed beneath the *ngainmara*, in sacredness. *Rangga* folk stand in the shade with the Brother and the elder Sister, and the first *nara* dancing begins in earnest. They stand in strict formation, like rising clouds, like 'fighting men'.

At this juncture, there is much stress on the *rangga* folk's having come from the Sisters: 'From resting within the womb: pulling them out from the womb! . . . Lying within the uterus!' This is a reference to their initial journey across the sea from Bralgu, and to their sojourn in the *ngainmara* and later in the sacred shade. The *nara* ritual continues, the *rangga* folk being guided by their leader, the Brother himself under the direction of Bildjiwuraroiju. Most of the ritual is related to incidents mentioned in Part One, for it is a re-enactment of the journey of the Djanggawul.

In the final Part (Ten), more *rangga* are removed; and the distinction between the sexes, originally noted in Part Six, is elaborated. The female *rangga* children are separated from the male children and declared sacred for they are like the Djanggawul Sisters—the source of all sacredness and ritual power. It is said that the *rangga* folk are born so that they may grow up to follow the Djanggawul law. The girls are 'sewn up' in the *ngainmara*; but they are later removed, having assumed or intensified their *rangga* quality. Many sacred baskets or dilly bags are hung from *djuda* and from the *nara* shade; from them *rangga* are removed, and with their feathered strings are placed to dry in the sun. The *nara* ritual proceeds, and the epic concludes suddenly with the cutting of the fringe of the basket.

Epilogue

This brief summary has mentioned only sparingly the symbolism 533
manifested in the cycle, being confined chiefly to a description of
the main incidents dealt with in the Songs. We may now indicate 539
something of their symbolic significance, and the basic trends which emerge.

The most important theme, which extends throughout the whole 533
cycle, centres about the sacred *ngainmara* mat. This is the symbolic
uterus, which makes its appearance in the early stages of the epic. 539
The *ngainmara* conical mat, while always retaining this essential 831
significance, is also expressed in other terms; it may be a whale, a basket or dilly bag, a well, or a *mara* shade, and all these come to be associated with its particular function. Although the Songs may mention only one uterus, usually the reference is to both Sisters, so that when one *ngainmara* is described, the context may suggest two. (Nouns, in dialects of this language group, retain the same form for singular and plural.)

Incorporated in this theme, and an important adjunct to the *ngainmara*, are the sacred *rangga* emblems with their feathered strings, made chiefly from parakeet breast feathers. These *rangga* are always referred to in conjunction with the *ngainmara*; fundamentally, they symbolize the male, the *ngainmara* the female. The *rangga* are manifested in various forms, each with its separately defined function: the *djanda* goanna and goanna tail with the *mauwulan*, have the power to bring forth water when plunged into the ground, while the *djuda* when 'planted' grow into green trees, and the feathered pendants attached to them become live parakeets. These are the primary *rangga* (although secondary *rangga* do exist, and are used on the *mara* ground), and they symbolize the penis. Once the basic significance of the *ngainmara* and the *rangga* is realized, and their importance as a twofold combination, many of the situations in the Songs become clear. Understanding of this simple but fundamental framework of the Djanggawul cult helps us to understand its more complex manifestations, and its wider implications. The symbolism of the *rangga* is also extended further, like the *ngainmara*, to include certain trees, the elongated penis of the Djanggawul Brother, and the people who emerge from the Sisters.

Although the *rangga* does not invariably represent the male (for example, it is frequently used to signify both male and female children emerging from the 'mat'), as the *ngainmara* does the female, this is its more usual significance. The testes, however, are absent from this constellation. It is possible that the hanging of sacred baskets from the *rangga* may have some relevance here, but since this is not the Aboriginal interpretation we shall not speculate further along those lines.

Epilogue

533 The two elements, the *ngainmara* and *rangga*, in their various forms,
539 serve as a combination through which two basic situations find
expression. The symbolism relates in the first place to sexual
831 intercourse, in the second to pregnancy and eventual childbirth.
Apart from such symbolic representations (although these are more numerous), direct references to coitus and childbirth are made, and help to explain the others.

Let us consider the first situation. *Rangga* emblems are kept within the *ngainmara* mat, being from time to time withdrawn and inserted into the ground; they are put away in the *ngainmara* and covered up, in sacredness; they are plunged into the ground to make wells, so that water gushes forth; *djuda rangga* are 'planted', so that trees grow from them; totemic objects and animals (birds or reptiles) are put into a sacred well, so that the water rises and overflows; *rangga* are put in the shelter of a *nara* shade, or returned to a sacred basket or dilly bag; parakeets fly into the *ngainmara*, basket, or well and are hidden within it out of sight; and the Djanggawul Brother erects his *rangga* to place it within the *ngainmara*. All these situations, and many more, symbolize the insertion of the Djanggawul Brother's penis in the *ngainmara*, which although really the uterus, may also signify vagina or vulva. The most complete symbolic representation of coitus is the plunging into the ground of the *mauwulan rangga* forming a well, with gushing water (that is, penis insertion/vagina/ejaculation/withdrawal). The rising water flooding the countryside signifies fertilization.

In the second case, the same elements are employed, but their significance is altered: the *ngainmara* (like its various associated forms) is solely the uterus, and the *rangga* and feathered strings are children (people or *rangga* folk). This seems, indeed, to be their most important manifestation. It is expressed in a number of obvious situations which have been indicated throughout this work. For example, *rangga* emblems and feathered strings are removed from the mouth of the *ngainmara* mat (shade, basket or well); the *ngainmara* is heavy, being full of *rangga* people; fish, which are declared totemic, are caught in fish traps (constructed from *rangga* poles); and fish escape from the mouth of the whale, or are swallowed when brought in by the rising tide. The ideal symbolic representation is the *ngainmara* mat full of *rangga*, which are later removed (that is, uterus/pregnancy/delivery of *rangga* folk).

These two correlated themes, then, are basic to the cycle; together, they centre about one of the fundamental drives of mankind. The need for sexual satisfaction is simply and symbolically expressed, with a complete absence of consciously erotic manifestations; following this come pregnancy and, eventually, childbirth. The

importance of physiological paternity has not, moreover, been left 533
a vague issue. The complementary rôles of male and female are 539
established traditionally, both symbolically and (to a lesser degree) 831
directly.

In addition to these, and in varying degrees linked with them, there are a number of subsidiary threads. There are four predominating themes, all in some degree interrelated, and almost invariably used in conjunction with the *ngainmara-rangga* concept. The first is crystallized in the umbilical cord, which is symbolically manifested in a variety of forms, the most important being the elongated clitorises of the Two Djanggawul Sisters, the long penis of the Brother, the prepuce, rays from the Morning Star, rays from the setting sun, feathered strings, and so on. Various examples are found in the Songs: the Djanggawul Brother cuts his long penis, after he and his companions have stolen the sacred basket and *rangga* from the Sisters; he shortens his Sisters' clitorises after the theft, when he and his companions have taken over control of the *nara*; and feathered strings removed from the *ngainmara* are arranged on the surface of the ground. The ideal illustration of the theme is as follows: *rangga* folk have their foreskins cut immediately after they have issued from the *ngainmara*-uterus, the foreskin symbolizing the umbilical cord, and its cutting their severance from the Mother; this is the intent of circumcisional initiation, with its subsequent 'rebirth'.

The second theme is connected with the sun. This element is 533
symbolically manifested in several ways, the most obvious being: 539
rays of light from the setting sun; the red reflections from the sunset, caught on the breast feathers of the *lindaridj* parakeet; the feathered *rangga* strings, the sacred basket pendants and the hair string waist-band intertwined with red feathers; the parakeet itself, with breast and throat feathers; fire; blood (flowing after birth, at menstruation, or as a result of the Djanggawul Brother's breaking the arm-band blockage in the younger Sister's vagina); red ochre; and the red walls of the vagina or labia majora. One of the most strongly emphasized of these is the parakeet, with its red breast feathers, constantly appearing throughout the cycle.

The third theme relates to water, in its fresh or salt manifestations. The pattern is set during the initial stage of the Djanggawul's journey to the north Australian mainland. The movement of the
sea is brought about (or intensified) through their paddling, and the [823]
presence of fish and marine creatures. This causes the ebb and flow of the tides. When the Djanggawul leave the sea to travel inland, and later along the coast, this theme is continued in the well waters rising and overflowing in conjunction with the tidal fluctuations. Even when the wells predominate, however, the sea

533 is not forgotten; the original theme is recalled again and again
throughout the cycle. It is the sea, too, which receives much atten-
539 tion in the *nara* rituals (for example, in those performed by *rangga*
folk, mentioned in the cycle). Nevertheless, the importance of the
[778] well waters must not be underestimated. Apart from their associa-
tion with the sea and its tides, they are in their own right spirit
centres; and these are sacred, for the *rangga* emblems have been put
within them or within their mud, and *djuda* have been planted around
them. Moreover, the well is identified with the uterus, with the
ngainmara, and with the sacred *nara* shade.

533 The fourth theme is concerned with seminal fluid, which is
symbolized by the foam of the sea, or by rough water surging
539 from an overflowing well. It is this foam which splashes on to the
831 *rangga* emblems and *ngainmara* mat during the Djanggawul's journey
from Bralgu, staining not only these objects and the feathered
strings, but also the long clitorises and penis, and leaving on them
a distinctive 'sea smell'. References are made throughout the cycle
to the drying of the feathered strings of the *rangga*, and of the baskets.

These elements then, with the *ngainmara* and *rangga*, provide the
533 skeletal structure or framework of the cycle, upon which the various
539 situations have been constructed and elaborated.

Apart from the purely human element, reflected in the removal of *rangga* folk who serve as a nucleus from which has grown the present Aboriginal population, the cycle is concerned, in its wider implication, with the universe about them. The Djanggawul are said to 'make country' as they travel. We have seen however, from both the Myth and the Songs, that the country as such was already there on their arrival. Where the Songs describe their 'making country', therefore, we must assume that they merely put additional physiographical features. They made the sacred sandhill at the Place of the Mauwulan, which is symbolically represented in every *nara* to-day; they made innumerable wells, both sacred and secular, and planted multitudes of trees; and from their *rangga* and feathered strings birds, reptiles, animals and vegetables (yams) came into being, or became totemic. The Morning Star was sent for them by the Spirit people at Bralgu, to guide them through the sea to Port Bradshaw. And the sun came up for them, driving away the darkness and lighting up the land, sending its glowing rays in every direction, and warming all it touched.

533 Apart too from the matter of human fetility, the cycle concerns
the fructification of the land, symbolized in the fluctuating tides
539 of the sea, and the rising well waters. The plunging into the ground
831 of the *mauwulan rangga*, with water gushing forth at its withdrawal,
does not represent human sexual intercourse alone; symbolic coitus

is taking place with the earth, so that it will be fertilized. The well 533 water overflows and spreads across the land; the incoming tides 539 push up the shallow tidal creeks and cover the low coastal plains: all symbolize the fertilization of the land. New vegetation will 831 grow; the dormant grass and plants will send out their shoots; trees will bear leaves, blossoms and fruit; and the natural species will increase. The *djuda rangga* carried by the Djanggawul are always 'planted' near well waters, and their roots are said to be like penes that fertilize the earth. Billowing clouds from the north-west beckon the Djanggawul onwards, as they move from place to place; and the intensity of the sun's heat scorches the grass, making the shadows of the clouds welcome and desirable, and drying the moistened *rangga*. All this symbolizes the coming monsoonal rains, which will replenish the earth, renew all plant and vegetable matter and the natural species. Further, it indicates man's place in the universe, emphasizing the fundamental similarity between himself and his environment. The sexual drive in man results in the increase of his own species, just as he sees to be the case among the living creatures around him: and that basic theme is extended and elaborated to include his whole physical environment. According to this point of view, the earth itself must, therefore, be fertilized in much the same way as man—through symbolic coitus, the plunging *mauwulan*, the piercing *djuda* roots, the flooding well, and the spreading incoming tide. All this to the Aborigine of north-eastern and north-central Arnhem Land, living as he does in close proximity to his environment, is real and vital. It constitutes for him a faith which is based essentially on his own experience, on a fundamental human and animal drive, projected on to his non-human and (as *we* see it) inanimate environment.

The Djanggawul myth and its songs, then, may be regarded as 533 centring on the two primary drives of man: the first, sex, with its natural consequences, the second, food, which enables him to 539 survive. Both are of equal importance, and both receive considera- 831 tion in this cycle. The dominating interest however is that of sex, in a broader sense than this is usually understood in our own society; the Aboriginal thesis is that through the operation of this drive seasonal fluctuations will occur, and will automatically ensure the provision of food. From the Aboriginal standpoint, then, man's survival is essentially dependant on the success of the sexual drive: for food cannot become available unless the natural species copulate and increase, unless the rains fall, the wells overflow and the tides spread and fertilize the land. This attitude to them is fundamental, and for that reason it has become an outstanding theme in the sacred Djanggawul cycle.

Epilogue

533 These factors obviously centre about the survival of the Aboriginal
539 social group, and in that respect they suggest an important
sociological attitude. The Djanggawul Sisters, through their
831 perpetual pregnancy, and their ability to produce great numbers of
rangga folk, the ancestors of the present-day Aborigines, express
their true function as Fertility Mothers. They define the physical
differences between males and females, between the *rangga* and the
mat; expressing this symbolically, they put the *rangga* boys who
emerge from their wombs into the coarse grass, the *rangga* girls
into the shelter of the *ngainmara*-uterus mat. By stressing the sacredness
of womankind, this Aboriginal culture has enshrined motherhood,
for it is realized that the continuity of the group is dependent
primarily, and in a more spectacular way, on the female. To ensure
this fertility, however, 'that the *rangga* within the *ngainmara* may
remain plentiful', the contribution of the virile male is essential.
The myth, therefore, acknowledges both physiological paternity
and maternity. The *rangga* is as sacred as the *ngainmara*; and insemination
(symbolically expressed in a variety of forms) is a
biological necessity in the fertility sequence of coitus, conception,
pregnancy and childbirth.

533 Two other important features receive attention in this cycle.
539 The first, and perhaps the more important from a sociological
point of view, is the division of labour between the sexes. The
462 Djanggawul Sisters lose their sacred basket or dilly bag and *rangga*
emblems, and the men take over control of the *nara* ritual. Now
the Sisters must grind the cycad nut to make 'bread'; their 'hands
must be whitened with its flour'. This mythological incident
indicates, symbolically, the present division of activities between
the sexes. It is not a question of any alteration in woman's status:
[562] she is not subordinated, or relegated to an 'inferior' position. On
the contrary, stress is placed on the complementary nature of their
activities. Woman must not resemble man, any more than man
may resemble woman, the essential nature and implications of each
(apart from biological factors) being culturally determined; hence
the clitoris of each Sister is cut, so that it may not resemble a man's
penis. Man may not be idle, merely collecting and preparing food
while woman performs all sacred ritual, possesses all the *rangga*
emblems and in addition carries out her important task of producing
children. If women are to ensure the continuity of the
group through childbearing, then men must perform the sacred
ritual and do the more strenuous work; for this reason, so we are
told, the men stole from the Sisters the sacred basket and *rangga*
533 and took charge of the *nara* ritual.

539 The second feature is the institution of the sacred *nara* ritual,

which is created by the Djanggawul themselves. The *rangga* folk dance from the wombs of their Mothers into the *nara* shade; the sacred clapping sticks are beaten, the songs rhymically sung, and they sway their bodies in the dance. The first *nara* is being performed, re-enacting the travels of the divine Beings; and the *rangga* folk have been produced 'so that they may follow the law'. The people, that is to say, by performing the *nara*, by re-enacting the travels of the Djanggawul and manipulating the *rangga* emblems, ensure the continuation of the life they know and love. The *nara* performed by the *rangga* folk under the direction of the Djanggawul is described as being exactly the same as that carried out by present-day Aborigines. It expresses the faith which they have in their social group, in their culture, and in their environment; it ensures the continuance of all the elements expressed directly and symbolically in the myth and in the Songs. Women will continue to bear children, the seasons will continue to come and go in ordered sequence, and the land will continue to produce food in abundance. All this will come about only if the *nara* is enacted, if the power of the Sacred Beings is made available, and if the faith of the people themselves—both men and women—retains the intensity and depth originally inspired by the Djanggawul. 533 539

The implications of the Djanggawul cult are numerous, and should be the subject of detailed and comprehensive treatment. Here, however, we can touch on them only briefly. 794 182

There is, for instance, the assumption that these Beings came from another country, somewhere to the east or north-east, bringing with them their sacred objects and ritual, and the essentials of their cult. That is, they were originally aliens, who presumably introduced their ideology to the indigenous inhabitants. The latter are here referred to vaguely as spirits, and not as human beings; this is, possibly, a form of rationalization, to the effect that the first 'real' people were those who adopted the Djanggawul cult.

Then there are what may be termed the various psycho-analytic points of view. Followers of Géza Roheim, for example, may see in the stress on the Mother, and (for instance) the identification of circumcision with the severing of the umbilical cord, a manifestation of the universal Oedipus Complex. Abram Kardiner and his school may find in the Djanggawul a projection of the emotions arising from the Aborigines' response towards their own parents during their early formative years. Moreover, the myth and songs may perhaps be regarded as, primarily, an expression of the fundamental motivations of the people, the narrative itself serving merely as a connecting thread, which provides a semblance of coherence.

Epilogue

194 182 Certainly we may assume that the elements which have been transmitted from one generation to another bear some relation to the cultural emphasis of the people, the emphases during the process being on those which were (consciously or otherwise) felt to be congenial. However, this question obviously raises many issues which cannot be dealt with here.

Finally, what is the future of the cult in the contact situation? The theme of fertility is obviously important in this respect, affecting as it does the continuance of the local Aboriginal group. [161] Elsewhere in Australia, with few exceptions, the Aborigines have declined in numbers under the disrupting influence of the alien culture. In north-central and north-eastern Arnhem Land, the emphasis on reproduction, among both human and animal species, appears to have served, so far, as a potent factor in combating this trend. The Djanggawul cult, therefore, may well be significant in helping to ensure that the Aborigines of this region continue to survive. Perhaps because of its basic associations, it is still a vital force in the society, with (in so far as such comparisons are possible) an even greater emotional hold on the people than other local cults which flourish contemporaneously with it.

000 This subject, too, needs careful consideration. Nevertheless, if something at least of the faith and the beliefs of the Djanggawul cult can be carried on into the changing society which is developing as a result of alien contact, it may help to ensure the north-central and north-eastern Arnhem Landers' physical survival. Moreover, the blending of such essential features of their traditional life with the new elements which they inevitably absorb from the alien culture will provide them with a situation which is in some degree congenial to them; and the psychological effects of this will have, also, an important bearing on their survival.

The themes which we have noted in this work are not limited in their application to one human group in one specific area. Although phrased in the terms of this particular culture, they have, so to speak, a universal validity. This being so, there is no reason why the Djanggawul cult, adapted perhaps to meet the demands of the present crisis in Aboriginal life, should not endure as a living faith, to play its part in ensuring the continuity of the Aboriginal group, as a people adjusted to meet, in their own way, the changing world which confronts them.

GLOSSARY

Ancestral Times, see *wongar*.
baba, father.
babarn, father's clan; a concept of moiety unity with descent through the father.
Baijini, pre-Macassan visitors to the north-eastern Arnhem Land coast: now considered to be virtually contemporaneous with the Djanggawul.
balma, 'let (them) stay there'; 'always there'; or 'stay(ing) behind'.
Banaitja, son of Laintjung, an Ancestral Being, of the *jiritja* moiety: represented totemically as a barramundi fish.
Bildjiwuraroiju, the elder Djanggawul Sister: see *gungman*.
billabong, usually a lake fed by a main stream, or a branch of a river that, instead of returning to the main stream, comes to a dead end. Billabongs are formed, too, during the monsoonal season in low-lying parts of the country, and may remain for the greater part of the year.
bilma, see clapping sticks.
Bralbral, the companion of the two Djanggawul Sisters and their Brother. He also came from Bralgu, and journeyed with them for some little time.
Bralgu, the mythical island(s) of the dead for members of the *dua* moiety, from which the Djanggawul set out on the last stage of their journey to the Australian mainland.
Brother, the Djanggawul Brother, who came with the Two Sisters.
buljei, smell; salty 'sea' smell; smell of vagina.
bugali, invocation; invoking the presence of (in this case) the Djanggawul.
'bush' foods, those of indigenous growth (uncultivated).

Glossary

clan, see *mala*.

clapping sticks, sometimes called *bilma*: two sticks of resonant wood clapped together by a singing man, while another man blows on the drone pipe.

conical mat, see *ngainmara*.

Creative Beings, that is, the Djanggawul Sisters and Brother. (Also certain other Ancestral Beings connected only indirectly with the theme considered here.)

cycad palm nut, 'bread': cycad nuts are specially prepared and made into 'dampers' like bread, wrapped in fine paperbark, and stored for ceremonial times. In this context it is usually employed sacramentally.

dabi, foreskin, umbilical cord, clitoris, sun's rays (as well as other symbolic references).

dagu, vagina, vulva, sun's disc (and other symbolic references).

dal, see 'power'.

dalwuldalwul, mouth of the *ngainmara* conical mat; symbolic of vulva, etc.

deimiri, species of sawfish.

dilly-bag, general term for certain indigenous twined baskets used by both men and women. There are many shapes and sizes, some painted with coloured ochres, others hung with feathered pendants: in the context of this study, usually the latter. (In all cases, symbolic of the uterus.)

djalga, water goanna; also sacred emblem.

djanda, sacred emblem; goanna; goanna tail; phallic symbol; same function as the *mauwulan rangga*.

djawuldjawul, a mangrove bird.

djuda, tree *rangga* emblem, from which trees sprang up when plunged into the ground by the Djanggawul.

djunggawon, age-grading circumcisional ceremonies associated with the Wauwalak Cycle, which is connected only incidentally with the Djanggawul.

djummal, a mangrove bird (unidentified); also called a 'message' bird.

Dreaming, see *wongar*.

drone pipe, didgeridoo; hollow wooden musical instrument into which a man blows to provide an accompaniment to singing and dancing.

dua, one of the two moieties in the dual organization: the moiety to which belong the Djanggawul and the totems associated with them.

dua nara, the ceremonies instituted by the Djanggawul; the ritual expressions of the songs and mythology of these Beings, controlled by members of the *dua* moiety.

dugarei, a periwinkle or black shell, collected by the Djanggawul Sisters while their sacred bags and *rangga* emblems were being stolen by the men.

duldjiduldji, point of the sacred *mauwulan rangga* emblem.

Glossary

'Eternal stream', see *wongar*.

'feathered ball', disc of the Morning Star. These 'balls' are made by the Spirits of Bralgu, attached to long strings and poles and sent into the sky as they dance.

gadin, clitoris (referring to those of the two Djanggawul Sisters).

gadu, daughter or son (man speaking); brother's children (woman speaking).

galibingu, a circumcision novice.

ganinjari, sacred 'yam' stick or 'walking stick' emblem possessed of life-giving properties (used by the Djanggawul to obtain water).

Goanna Tail *rangga*, see *djanda*.

ground, sacred, used for sacred dancing, for example, of the *nara*; in this context it is symbolic of the uterus of either Djanggawul Sister.

gudara, sister's daughter's son or daughter, son's son or daughter (man speaking). See *mari* (*gudara* is the reciprocal of *mari*).

gumur, chest, front, barrier, etc.

gungman, referring to the elder Djanggawul Sister; a general word meaning a mature woman of child-bearing age, with children.

gurlga, penis; roots of tree (and many associated symbolic references).

jelagandja, a spirit bag; dilly bag; symbolic uterus.

Jelangbara, Port Bradshaw; sacred site on which the Djanggawul landed, of great significance in this cycle.

jiritja, one of the two moieties in the dual organization: associated with certain Spirits, Ancestral Beings and so on with which the Djanggawul came into association.

jiritja nara, the ceremonies associated with this moiety: connected only indirectly with the Djanggawul.

judu, child; semen.

jugujugu, younger sibling.

Julunggul, Rock Python snake, Rainbow, phallic symbol; used in association with the Wauwalak Sisters, a separate *dua* moiety cycle.

kunapipi, ceremonies related to the Wauwalak Sisters, and to a Fertility Mother concept introduced into northern Arnhem Land from the south; of higher ritual value than the *djunggawon*.

Laintjung, a *jiritja* moiety Ancestral Being who, with his son Banaitja, is the sponsor and instigator of the *jiritja nara* ceremonies.

ligan, jutting limb of a tree; elbow (of the Djanggawul Brother); sacred emblem; part of the *djuda rangga*, etc.

lindaridj, parakeet; feathers; redbreast feathers; feathered string and pendants. Of great importance in this cycle, with many symbolic references.

linguistic group, see *mata*.

maidjara, all the sacred emblems together.

Glossary

mala, in general speech, a crowd; specifically, a clan, with which one or more linguistic groups (*mata*) are associated; exogamous, and of patrilineal descent.

malara, group of clans; crowd; flock (of birds).

mali, human spirit, living or dead; used also in reference to *rangga*; a likeness, shadow, or reflection.

mandiela, circumcision ceremony associated with the Wauwalak Cycle: introduced into north-central Arnhem Land, but not into the north-east.

marabinjin, a species of sawfish.

mareiin (or *mareijin*), meaning sacred: also, a *nara* ceremony. Used in reference to men and women under certain conditions, to ceremonies, emblems, etc.

mari, mother's mother, mother's mother's brother, mother's brother's son's wife, mother's mother's brother's son's son or daughter, wife's brother's wife. See *waridj* and *gudara*.

mata, a linguistic group: one or more may belong to a clan or *mala*: exogamous, and of patrilineal descent. The *mata* is one of the most important units in eastern Arnhem Land social organization.

mauwulan, sacred emblem (*rangga*); stick used by the Djanggawul as a 'walking stick'; of life-saving properties (used to obtain water and make wells).

milngur, 'well', gushing spring; of symbolic significance.

Miralaidj, the younger Djanggawul Sister. See *wirlgul*.

moiety, see *dua*; *jiritja*; patrilineal in descent, and exogamous.

mugul rumarang, actual wife's mother (tabu).

munji, red berries of an unidentified bush.

nara, ceremony, see *dua nara*; *jiritja nara*.

native companion, the brolga bird.

ngadiba, waist-band of human hair.

ngadili, black cockatoo.

ngainmara mat, conically shaped. Of major significance in this cycle, belonging to the Djanggawul Sisters; a uterus symbol, a whale, etc.

ngandi, mother.

ngaungau, tabu.

ngurlmag, ceremonies of the Wauwalak cycle, of higher ritual status than the *kunapipi* or *djunggawon*.

nundu, a short conical mangrove shell (collected by the Djanggawul Sisters when their sacred emblems and bags were stolen by the men).

'power', sacred and ritual power, *dal*. A quality possessed by the Creative Beings, including the Djanggawul.

ragai, bulrush roots.

rangga, sacred emblem: used throughout this Djanggawul cycle.

Glossary

rangga folk, *rangga* clansfolk, 'Sons and Daughters of the Djanggawul', those who initially emerged from the Djanggawul Sisters; ancestors of the present-day eastern Arnhem Landers; various symbolic references.

sacred hut, see shade, sacred.

sacred poles, emblems with life-giving properties (that is, *rangga*).

shade, sacred; hut or shelter placed (in this context) on the *nara* ceremonial ground from which dancers emerge; in it the *rangga* emblems are stored. Symbolic of the uterus, etc.

spearthrower, wooden object used to propel a spear.

spring water, which gushes forth when a *rangga* emblem is plunged into the ground; water bubbling up from the ground; well or waterhole overflowing. Symbolically significant.

'sugarbag', bee, wild honey (deposited in the ground or tree).

totemic, natural species and inanimate objects etc, which through their divine association with the Djanggawul Sisters and Brother (or other Creative Beings) become totemic. The Djanggawul themselves were not totemic.

trepang, bêche-de-mer, sea slug: collected in historic times by the Baijini (pre-Maccassans) and Macassan traders.

Two Sisters, in this context the Djanggawul Sisters; the Fertility Mothers.

wagu, sister's son or daughter (man speaking); own son or daughter (woman speaking).

waridj, mother's mother's brother's son's son; or *mari*; a non-tabu-ed 'mother-in-law' (mother's brother's wife).

waterhole, see well.

Wauwalak, Two Sisters of the *dua* moiety, who sponsored the *djunggawon*, *kunapipi*, *ngurlmag* and *mandiela* ceremonies.

well, a waterhole, made by the Creative Beings: in this area, either rock-holes, soaks or deep wells of a permanent nature, in low-lying coastal regions subject to tidal fluctuations and monsoonal flooding. Many symbolic references.

wet season, monsoonal period, commencing in approximately November–December, and ending in approximately April–May.

wirlgul, referring to the younger Djanggawul Sister: an adolescent or pre-adolescent girl.

wongar, Dreaming, (belonging to the) 'Eternal' Dreamtime or 'Eternal Stream', Ancestral Times; Mythological period. Some Ancestral Beings and Spirits are *wongar*, but not the Djanggawul. Mainly a totemic concept.

wulma, cloud.

yam stick, woman's digging stick; in this context, used by the Djanggawul, a sacred emblem. See *ganinjari*.

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